THE MOTIVES OF MEN

GEORGE A. COE

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Rev. Robert Carlson

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THE MOTIVES OF MEN

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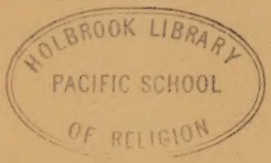
THE MOTIVES OF MEN

BY

GEORGE A. COE

AUTHOR OF "WHAT AILS OUR YOUTH," "A SOCIAL THEORY OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION," ETC.



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PREFACE

Now that the long labor of writing this book is done, what does it all amount to? Only the reader can answer this question; but perhaps the reader's labor can be facilitated by knowing what moved the author to write. This, then, as nearly as I can tell the story, is the way it all happened.

Imagine yourself to be the following kind of polyglot being: Your daily occupation is teaching the principles of education with particular reference to the formation of moral and religious character; you have taken some part in developing the psychology of religion, and you teach a class in this subject also; you are likewise keenly interested in the movements of the religious and social life of our time.

On each of these three sides of you there emerges one and the same problem—the dynamics of mind, specifically the human mind. As teacher of education you must consider what motives are in operation in both adult life and child life, how selection among them is made, and how some can be caused to grow, and others not to grow. As student of the psychology of religion you must inquire what it is that allures men into their enormous involvement in religious practices and institutions. As churchman and as citizen of the world you pause before the waning influence of churches upon civilization, and before the waxing influence of industrialism; and you cannot ignore either the large-scale ignoble conduct that

we are witnessing or the cynical explanations of it that are rife.

Thus the task of identifying the good and the evil at the springs of conduct forces itself upon you. Scientific psychology meets your curiosity only half way, or less than half way. Until recently it has been too little interested in mental dynamics; it has felt a compulsion to generalize the human and sub-human, the mental and the biological, the biological and the physical, with no corresponding concentration upon the specific performances of the human mind; it has been, that is to say, *self-forgetting;* and, even now that the dynamic problem is coming to the fore, the question what we human beings specifically are, dynamically considered, has only begun to be asked.

But, surrounding the uncertainties of technical psychology, there is a world of certainties, or at least assumptions, on the part of "practical" men. The nature of "human nature" has become everybody's concern. From our sex-tangles up through our industrial and economic tangles to our international tangles, some notion of human motives is a controlling factor in thought and policy. Literature is, of course, saturated with assumptions concerning the springs of action. With great frequency in recent years exposition of such assumptions has been the theme of fiction and of drama. The schools and the churches, on their part, make one or another view of our motives the base-line of all their planning.

A general survey of this partly technical but mostly untechnical mass of opinions appears to be worth undertaking. It is doubly needed just now because there is extensive and growing dissent from

assumptions concerning the inherent nobility of our nature that were taken for granted not so long ago. We have entered upon a period of spiritual depression. The opinion may be ventured, moreover, that some view of human motives is going to be the turning point of every perilous issue in modern life and civilization.

This is the area that I have surveyed. I have done it with any critical apparatus that I could lay my hands upon, not scrupling to place side by side considerations drawn from psychology, biology, current history, education, and common experience.

Throughout my treatment of this theme I have freely applied valuational terms such as "good," "bad," "high," and "low" to facts of conduct and to motives, and I have treated various experiences as desirable or undesirable. This involves an assumption, of course. For it is possible to entertain a view of motivation that forbids us to think that anything is better than anything else.

> I bring to life; I bring to death.
> . . . . . .
> I know no more.

It has seemed unnecessary to confront this view with a theory of valuation; rather, I have taken for granted—as even the exponents of a-morality do when their theory has to be defended—that better and worse have objective meaning. Further, I have assumed the validity of the general trend of valuations that has already put the common good above egoistic satisfactions, and that would add to physiological welfare a growing experience of knowledge, beauty, and fellowship.

An invitation to give the Nathaniel Taylor lectures at the Divinity School of Yale University in

the spring of 1926 jogged me into the present effort to systematize problems and considerations that long had made my roof their habitation. The interest that was shown in the problem of the lectures—for which, as well as the jogging just mentioned I am deeply indebted—instead of making me ready to print, drove me to further study. As a consequence, though the general organization of the discussion still follows the course of the four lectures, additional problems have been attacked, the material has been multiplied, and further solutions have been offered.

GEORGE A. COE.

In the Sunshine,
Glendora, California,
May, 1928.

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INTRODUCTION

THE MOTIVES OF MEN

I

ON HAVING A GOOD SUPPLY OF WANTS

> Man wants but little here below,
> Nor wants that little long.

So runs an old paraphrase of a still older sentiment. If it were true, we should be in a bad fix.

A savage, indeed, wants little; this is what makes him a savage. You cannot pry him loose from his savagery except by the lever of increased desires, whether for a rifle, or for a piece of calico, or for a house with windows.

Whatever keeps us going in any direction, together with whatever makes us select a new direction from time to time—in other words, our motivation—is what we are. Meagre wants, meagre manhood; enlarging wants, enlarging manhood. The man of heroic mold makes outreaching demands upon life, unabashed by the difficulty of supplying them.

Even the Stoics who, superficially considered, practised renunciation of wants, in reality withdrew from smaller wants into larger ones. They did not forego but cultivated the cravings of intellect; in human relations magnanimity was their standard, with dignified friendship as an experience fit for a philosopher. It was this expansiveness of their motives that made possible their serenity of spirit.

A generation that has a large supply of narrow-range wants, together with plenty of corresponding narrow-range goods, easily becomes self-deceived. Because it gets what it wants, it believes that it is efficient. It fancies that if one only enlarges one's barns and fills them full one will live more largely, whereas, to live in the human way is to manipulate our wants, and to live largely is to expand, diversify, and re-create them.

The excuse for saying so obvious a thing is that, in spite of its obviousness, people do not believe it. If they did, the state of education and of religion, both of which have specifically to do with the ends of living, would be different from what it is. Churches and schools are peddling the wares that they already possess instead of stimulating a demand for better goods than we have in stock.

Dr. Faustus, in his meditative search for the foundation of existence, rejects the Johannine dictum, "In the beginning was the Word" (or universal Reason), substituting for it, "In the beginning was the Act." He might well have said, "In the beginning was the Want."

What then, are the motives of men? In particular, what are we capable of wanting, and what are we capable of doing with our wants? After moving some little distance from the wants of savages, must we pause and merely repeat our wantings henceforth? Or, indeed, are our desires in any significant way different from those of our savage ancestors? If we are able to manage our desires to any degree, what is the main problem of management, and how is it to be solved?

PART I

DISILLUSIONMENT WITH RESPECT TO HIMSELF CREEPS UPON TWENTIETH-CENTURY MAN

II

OUR BELIEF IN MAN YESTERDAY AND TODAY

A lumber-jack resolved that he would build himself a home, and settle down. Selecting a piece of timberland, he proceeded to clear it. Day after day, week after week, his great muscles worked with axe and saw, and with chain and reins until the trees were felled and burned, and the time for grubbing and planting had come. Then he looked at his cleared land, and behold, the ground was so rocky that it was not worth cultivating. For he was a specialist in subduing mighty forests, not in nurturing food-plants.

The western world, having found a key to the knowledge that is power—the key of scientific method—has been engaged for a few generations in unprecedented exploits in the mastery of nature. Her resources have been discovered and seized; processes of control have been devised; tools have been invented; hitherto intractable areas of the universe have been subdued; and power and possessions beyond all the dreams of our fathers are in our hands.[1]

The result is, of course, a changed position of man in the physical universe; but it is not merely this. Man's position in relation to man has changed likewise. For we have been at work upon mankind as

[1] This and several other paragraphs first appeared in the New York Times, 1926.

well as upon wood and iron. The occupations of men, and their possessions also, have silently wrought within the mind, the servant fashioning his master as well as the master the servant. Our inlooks as well as our outlooks have undergone a metamorphosis. Here, in men's attitudes toward one another, and in what they think of themselves, we come upon the most significant product of modern science, invention, and industry.

The chief output of mines is miners and mine operators; the chief product of factories is operatives, managers, and absentee shareholders; the goods mainly dealt in by department stores are salespeople and customers; the outstanding contribution of finance in the modern world does not appear in the profit-and-loss account of any bank, for it is the banker himself and his clients. If we would estimate the efficiencies of the industrial age, we must study the men, women and children all about us, and among other things we must take account of what they think of one another.

Some of the things that are happening to us can readily be discerned. This high-strung humanity of ours is awake on some sides of its mind if not on others; it is highly organized, industrially focalized, scientifically managed, psychologically analyzed; it is rich in things, but it is distracted and ethically upset. At the moment when enormous power to work our will is added to us, we become partly unsure as to what we want, but mostly a sense of disillusionment pervades our powers. Disillusionment, that is, with respect to the genuine worth of all our motives and all our straining and striving and organizing.

The signs of this depression are unmistakable.

In the last quarter of the nineteenth century our youth were nurtured upon Tennyson's smooth confidence that "Nothing walks with aimless feet"; upon Browning's morning song, "All's well with the world"; upon Emerson's apothegm that when two neighbors converse across a fence, "Jove nods to Jove over the head of each." A divinity within man seemed to be attested by his conquest of nature, by his place in the system of evolution, by the progress of knowledge, by the developmental character of religions, and by the growth of philanthropy. Under the widely-heralded doctrine of divine immanence all creation was meaningful, and the human mind, in particular, was taken to be the point at which the otherwise hidden meanings of the universe blossomed forth. Even in the strain of economic life there was a certain lushness of belief in human capacity. Corresponding to the feeling that our natural resources were exhaustless, there was a prevalent assumption that success was within the reach of anyone who chose to be industrious and enterprising. An enormous increase of immigration was welcomed. Having purged ourselves of slavery, we believed that the United States had reached its political maturity, and that it was destined to be the political light of the whole world. The capacity of men to govern themselves was taken for granted. Thus, in America, at least, human kind felt itself to be young, growing, destined to high achievement; and these were taken to be simply human qualities that manifest themselves wherever environmental conditions are favorable.

At none of these points does the old confidence in man remain unimpaired. We are not so sure that progress is inherently provided for in the nature of

man; we are far more sure of something old, crude, and of pine-stump quality in our make-up. Tacitly, if not overtly, men assume that irrational desires are the dominant forces within us, and that conflict has precedence in human motives. There is a growing skepticism of the worth of the common man. It is becoming almost popular to sneer at democracy. We rely—increasingly, it appears—upon force and cunning, or upon the automatic working of social mechanisms, instead of trusting to open eyes and to reason. We are afraid to use our freedom, or to let others enjoy the liberties that we have guaranteed in our laws and constitutions. We are putting up walls of many kinds to protect ourselves from our fellows. A partly blatant, partly furtive nationalism has displaced the bland and expansive political consciousness of the last generation, and both at home and abroad our policies are governed by an ungenerous caution. In all our history were we ever moved by fears as much as now? Were forward-looking proposals ever so regularly confronted with "Human nature being what it is, you cannot do it"?

A child with lots of playthings, but fidgeting, and dissatisfied with himself—here is a motif for a cartoonist who would depict the present condition of the western world.

How is this clouding of our sky to be accounted for, and what does it signify concerning the immediate tasks of our civilization? Is this depreciation of man simply a phase of the depression that always follows a great war? Is it a by-product of modern science, which reveals on the one hand the baffling immensity of nature, and on the other hand our blood-relationship with the lowest orders of living things? Is it a consequence of scientific psychology in gen-

eral; or of behaviorism in particular; or, perchance, of psychoanalysis? Has it been "put over" on the populace by dramatists and fiction-mongers who find it remunerative to exaggerate the selfish and sensual aspects of life in the name of realism? Even if all these have combined to push us in the same direction, are they sufficient to account for what has happened? To what degree are they symptoms, and to what degree causes? May not the everyday conduct of all of us have had some influence in determining what we think of one another? If so, how does it happen that we have so behaved ourselves as to lower our estimate of human motives in general? What have we done to produce the present disillusionment?

III

WHAT THE WAR DID TO OUR BELIEF IN MAN

If the term "war" includes, as well it may, what goes on in the minds of men when nations cross swords, then the hardest battles, the greatest victories, and the greatest defeats of the Great War occurred, not upon the soil of France, but within our sense of the meaning and value of life. Looked at in this most profound and tragic way, the War is still going on. For in our own souls kindly and trustful sentiments are engaged in mortal combat with a powerful urge towards distrust and contempt, if not hate; and—what is of the utmost consequence—in *this* battle national boundaries disappear altogether. We are to win or to lose for mankind as a whole; our respect for ourselves, with all that this implies, will go up or down with our respect for those that, nationalistically considered, have been or yet may be our enemies.

The psychological history of the War proves this. During the years that immediately preceded the outbreak of hostilities something like a mild, cosmopolitan humanitarianism prevailed in the mass of the people, even though it did not prevail and never had done so in the offices of state where, as a regular part of the day's work, wars are forecast and prepared for. Surprise at the thunderous onset of the storm was followed immediately by desire to fix upon some-

body the blame for it. This natural impulse was abetted directly and of policy by the various governments involved in order to enlist moral sentiment, or what the people felt to be moral sentiment, against the enemy. The truth concerning the causes of the War was not the concern of any of the warring states; rather, regimenting, militarizing the consciences of the people so that they would fight more bitterly and obey their commanders more unquestioningly, was the all-dominating policy.

Next came the exposition and interpretation of battlefield experience. Again it was in the nature of the situation that the people should spontaneously abhor the enemy—was he not killing and maiming our boys? Under these conditions two things were certain to happen: Combatants on both sides were bound to grow ruthless, and on both sides the ruthlessness of the enemy was bound to be exaggerated even without intent to deceive, while the ruthlessness of our own soldiers (whichever side we were on) was not described to us; it was a technical military detail.

Then was added deception of our own people as an apparently necessary military measure. To work up the whole people into one consuming fury, yet a fury utterly obedient to military command, seemed to be the dictate of mere efficiency. Hence tales of atrocities, in which fact, honest error, and deliberate lies were inextricably mixed, were fed to the populace by marvellously organized departments of propaganda. It happened that psychologists had just then worked out various problems of effective advertising, salesmanship, and personnel management, so that an instrument of enormous potentiality was available. Its power was at a maximum now, because the authorities

of the state were able to close all competing channels of public information.

The first result of this psychic campaign was the arousal of much of the desired fury. It involved and evolved great simplicity of conviction: The enemy state is totally bad; then, the enemy people are totally bad, one and all; then, the racial stock is totally bad, so that even the children of the enemy are unfit to live; conversely, we, taken in our governmental capacity, are above criticism; yes, we belong to an innately superior stock, and our allies are about as good as we are.

Let us keep our eyes upon our main question, and not be diverted into the other lines of thought that are here near the surface. Our sole present concern is to see what effect the total War experience had upon our respect for human nature. At the culmination of the mental hostilities extreme contempt for a part of mankind was married to extreme approval of another part.

Here was, of course, unstable equilibrium; there was bound to be some sort of tip-over, perhaps a succession of tip-overs. Effort followed to prevent a radical reversal of this type of judgment, it is true, by hunting for innate superiorities and inferiorities of race. It is a safe guess that the future historian of science will smile at the nursing bottles that were offered to our self-esteem directly following the War! Such feeding was peculiarly inept in the United States. Here, where many races both mingle and intermarry, the notion of racial virtues and racial defects could not bolster up our national pride or our contempt for any other people.

Even if this race-discrimination that calls itself scientific were well established and agreed upon by

experts, it could not protect our self-respect against calamities that came to it directly from the War. For the nature of governmental propaganda was found out. Citizens learned that they had been deliberately, systematically, and grossly deceived by their own virtue-professing governments. This of itself would have been sufficient to take away both the glamour of our assumed superiority and the hideousness of the enemy's depravity. But this revelation of the real nature of the modern state was only one of several experiences that focussed at the same point. Dissatisfaction with the terms of the peace and with the post-bellum tactics of our allies; the realization that more wars are now in the making, and that even one more war may wreck civilization; the financial costs and the financial entanglements entailed by our martial exploit; revelations concerning the profits of patriotism; finally, analyses of the intelligence tests that were given to our soldiers—all these worked directly against the high-flown self-esteem that buoyed us up during the clash of arms.

But the bursting of the bubble has not produced the humility of the penitent or of the learner. Instead of being stimulated to a reasonable re-assessment of our national needs, we are irritated, we fall a-scrambling among ourselves, our life as a people lacks meaning to us ourselves—unless, indeed, this meaning be economic imperialism, of which more later.

Thus it is that, in the by and large, our estimate of the motives of men, our own motives included, has shifted by reason of our war-experience in the direction of what we believed the enemy to be while we were fighting him in the field. It is true that our estimate of him has been modified, for the most part grudgingly, yet "In the War you see what human nature

really is" comes painfully close to being the net average judgment of the whole psychic tragedy. It is not only the cynic who says this; it is not only an occasional psychologist who thinks that man is by nature a fighting animal; the statesman, the financier, the industrialist, and the "man in the street" are more on guard against man as such.

But this is not the whole story; the "inside of the cup" still requires examination. What if the War itself sprang from causes that were already undermining man's confidence in man? What if the silliness of our views of man in 1918 were merely a pustule through which a systemic social disease poured itself? Certainly the current "There you see what human nature really is" is less a discovery than a confirmation of an antecedent opinion; it is an "I told you so." It is patent to all who think about such matters that the Great War was no meteorite, dropping upon us from outside our system of everyday life, but a direct and entirely to-be-expected growth within this system. Society did not suddenly change its habits, or suddenly get sick. Conflict was already here under other names—the language was industrial, commercial, economic, but the hand was the hand of Jacob. We shall have occasion, a little later in our inquiry, to ask somewhat in detail what motives industrialism has been bringing to the fore, and what part, accordingly, industrialism has had in bringing about the present sense of disillusionment. Certainly the roots of the modern war-system derive their chief sustenance from economic desires; and just as certainly we were judging men before the War by these desires and by the conduct that they produced.

This mind-set, already present when hostilities started, helps explain several items in the psychic

history of the War. Take, for example, the grotesque psychic compound, patriotism plus profiteering. How was it possible, it has been said, for citizens to profess intense patriotism and utter devotion to winning the War at the very moment when they extorted high payment for their support of it? Did they want the War merely for the sake of the profits it brought them? No, for they gave their sons with alacrity. The human-nature puzzle that we have to work out is that of a sincere patriotism that could be at the same time (as far as the profiteer's consciousness is concerned) an eager, self-regarding, profit-making business enterprise. The solution of the puzzle, apart from the general principle of mixed motives, is to be found in the habitual meaning that life already had acquired. Of course one must make profits from every move; why not? The irony of the situation—unperturbed and sincere devotion to a way of life that produces wars that sacrifice one's own offspring in battle—is obvious to anyone who stands outside industrialism as an observer and critic of it. To some extent, the people have begun to see it; the emotional color of the term "war profiteer" is evidence; but we shall not appreciate the whole truth until we realize that in and through the accepted ways of industrialism a degraded view of "what we are here for" had come to be taken for granted.

It is partly because men did not assume nobility in man, and were therefore unready to look for it or notice it, and therefore did not tell others of it when it did break forth, that we heard so little concerning the finest conduct of the soldiers of all the belligerent powers, friend and foe alike. Think of the sportsmanlike treatment of enemies while the fighting was still going on; the magnanimity that

was taken for granted in individual relations between warriors; the countless deeds of mercy both within the area of hostilities and round about, both during and after the conflict; the half dumb, and wholly blind, belief of many a soldier that he was doing his utmost for an ideal cause; and do not forget the sincere response of the mass of the American people to the idealism of the "Fourteen Points." Weigh all this, and then add to it the fact that war-makers cannot get their own people to fight without first deceitfully frightening them or artificially working up hatred by means of propaganda.

Here, as in the case of the war-profiteer, we behold moral confusion, but on the whole a downward trend in our regard for our own qualities. Our returning soldiers, voicing the slogan "Treat 'em rough!" and applying it alike to former enemies and to citizens who made moral distinctions with respect to former enemies, gave us a hint of the extent to which belief in force as the arbiter of human relations was spreading. Taken simply and without qualification, this belief means, among other things, that men are bound to fight, and that when they fight they will be ruthless butchers on the field and smug profiteers at home. This is not quite true, but why do we constantly drift towards a belief that it is? Why do we not counteract it by bringing into the foreground the generosity that men actually exhibit, and even the fact that lower and higher motives are struggling within them? A war does not suddenly create such beliefs. They were here before 1914; they helped make the world-catastrophe possible, but they have now been accelerated by their own work.

We now have the clue to certain incidents and phases of the peace-making. It was a peace-making

only in the relatively superficial sense of pausing in the use of explosives. It was not reconciliation; it was external, not psychic; and it was external because all the peacemakers assumed that the conventionally accepted motives are fundamental in human nature and are to be dominant "world without end." Underneath all the instability of the peace and all the insincerity of such measures as the mandates is a low conception of what we are, what we want, and what we are capable of becoming—a conception that was not created by the War.

Why is it that the universal horror of this War does not lead to repentance for war-making? Repentance, that is, for the habitual indulgence of motives and methods of daily living that make armies and navies, secretaries of war (actually normal in times of peace), international animosities, and finally war itself a characteristic phase of nationalism? Why don't we turn over a new leaf? Made-to-order psychology which attributes the climax of fighting to a fighting instinct, ignoring the actual antecedents of every actual war, does not get us far toward an explanation, even if it has within itself a fragment of truth. We must go back to our everyday living if we are to explain our reluctance to repent for war-making, and we must see our everyday living in terms primarily of our wants and our notions about them. Practically nobody wants war; we are not exactly tigers and vultures; but something prevents us from having robust confidence in our ability to avoid the fatal steps. Fortunately, we are not consistently depreciative of ourselves. Even at Versailles, much more in the League of Nations (with all its handicaps and timidities), still more, possibly, in the World Court, an inextinguishable hope, a living

shoot of real confidence in human nature, is perceptible. What shall come of it will depend, in some measure, upon stopping to consider what we want, and then thinking straight.

IV

HAS THE THEORY OF EVOLUTION DEGRADED US IN OUR OWN EYES?

What keeps alive the notion that the theory of evolution derogates from the dignity of man? One would suppose, offhand, that nothing but our own conduct could either disgrace or dignify us except to minds that judge by perverted standards. In a period of history in which society has begun to shake off artificial class-distinctions, and to permit men to rise or fall by virtue of their own individual force or lack of force, how can we revert to an exaggerated pride or shame of ancestry?

A third of a century ago a college student, for the first time coming to close quarters with the biological view of man, asked, "Professor, what becomes of our respect for man if he is a blood-relative of the beasts?" I replied, mindful of the fact that this student and his family were new Americans, "Does the worth of an individual depend upon what his grandfather was, or rather upon what he himself is?" The student, with a laugh, promptly took the position of all believers in democracy—"A man's a man for a' that!"

Even Ezekiel of old, with few democratic traditions, but deeply reflecting upon the ways of God, rejected the doctrine that worth or desert depends upon membership in any ancestral or other group. The people expressed their traditional view in the

aphorism, "The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are on edge," but the prophet declared that God judges "everyone according to his ways." One would expect those who are not only heirs of the democratic tradition but also lovers of the Bible to take the same point of view. Yet it is chiefly persons versed in the Bible who complain that belief in evolution must degrade us in our own eyes. Perhaps "versed in the Bible" is not the best designation, for the persons in question are those who are most inclined to a literal interpretation of the biblical story of creation, which declares that man was made "out of the dust of the ground." How, one wonders, does this text affect the Fundamentalist's notion of human dignity?

Evidently there is something in the background of the objector's mind that is not specified in his argument. What is this unmentioned premise? Is the complaint that the dignity of man is affronted by the theory of evolution a case of "rationalization," that is, the invention of a reason that for some cause is more convenient than the facts—an invention that may not be realized to be thus artificial?

The objection does not rest upon any alleged letting-down of conduct that can be traced to a belief in evolution. It may very well have happened that, by the roundabout way of a different sort of rationalization, consciousness of our evolutionary origin has promoted loose living. For example, those whose philosophy of life already was, "Let us eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die," might have said, "We are animals anyway; let us live as such." This would have been self-sophistication, of course, for no evolution-theory ever said that we are not, *qua* human, different from other animals; moreover,

the "Let us" was not derived or derivable from the theory. At most, we have here a rationalizing excuse by which to maintain one's "face" to oneself or to others. But anti-evolutionists fail to give specific evidence that even in this indirect and sophistical way the theory has produced a letting down.

It is possible that the mistaken identification of evolution with a single theory of its process, struggle for existence and survival of the fittest, has aided and abetted selfishness and ruthlessness in competitive business and competitive nationalism. But this kind of competition does not wait for scientific justification, and when it alleges evolution as an excuse, it indulges in self-sophistication just as do the sybarites who have been mentioned. For "existence" does not mean the same thing for man and his animal ancestors, and therefore "fittest" does not. In prehuman species there is no precedent for the alternatives between which the business man and the statesman have to choose. Rationalization again!

It is scarcely necessary to inquire whether academic ethical theory has been seduced by the evolutionary aspect of life. Little more is needed than to recall a name and a circumstance or two. The name is that of Huxley, rigorous evolutionist, who with all the emphasis that he could command insisted that the tooth-and-claw principle does not apply to the human species. An important circumstance is the blossoming of humanitarian service during this period, with its inevitable reverberation in ethical thinking. The ethical life is now almost universally understood to be the life of mutual helpfulness. This view is strongly backed up by sociology, theoretical and practical, with its continual reminder of the solidarity of men, and by the parallel development of social psychology,

which finds that personal existence as such is a mutual affair.

All the more reason, then, for asking why anybody supposes that our respect for ourselves depends at all upon our holding or not holding the evolution theory. If, in order to answer this question, I must flail some old straw, the excuse is that the search for the sources of our twentieth-century depreciation of man is worthy of some thoroughness. Well, then, it is clear that there is no logical thoroughfare between our disillusionment and the theory of descent. As far as the logic of the theological anxiety is concerned, Huxley's retort to Wilberforce in the famous sitting of the British Association is final. If we were logical, it would be far more derogatory to our *amour propre* to be related to a human scoundrel, or even, as Huxley so crushingly said, to an evasive, only half-honest debater, than to reckon ape-like creatures in our ancestry.

As a matter of fact, we do retain our regard for ourselves in the full light of our blood-relationship with men of all sorts of evil traits, even brutish ones. Fox, tiger, serpent, viper, shark, blood-sucker, vulture—all these epithets—some of them actually biblical—have long been applied to members of our species. Within the consanguinity of the most convinced Fundamentalist there are thieves, murderers, ravishers, maniacs, and idiots. One whose self-respect remains intact in the presence of this truth is simply self-deceived if he imagines that his sense of human dignity would be affronted by admitting that the anthropoids are his distant cousins. No, each of us readily asserts his superiority to his relatives, so readily that the theory of evolution simply cannot have had the effect supposed. At the most, advantage

has been taken of it to emphasize or reinforce notions that have their source elsewhere. In the case of the Fundamentalists, antagonism to the concept of evolution upon this ground is a cloak that is employed, more or less unconsciously, to cover some other reason for the opposition.

The more one looks into the course of religious thought, and of popular thought in general, since Darwin, the more certain becomes this conclusion. Biologists and biological psychologists, as far as I am aware, never claimed to add a single item to the already recognized list of beast-like qualities in men, and theologians never attacked evolution upon any such ground. Rather, what the new view of us added was an explanation of "how we got that way," and the explanation—mark this—constituted a partial excuse (not justification, but excuse) for much of our bad conduct. It actually lifted from us a part of the condemnation that was inherent in the theological view of special creation.

It is a fact, moreover, that—whether logically or not—from the evolutionary view of the past men gathered confidence in their own capacity for progress. Today we are actually embarrassed by the too-easy identification of evolution with progress. Men's self-esteem was too much enhanced and soothed.

What is not less interesting from the theological point of view is that the previously current views of the nature and work of God were ennobled. Whether logically or not, men thought that they saw more meanings, or saw them more clearly, in the system of nature. "Star-dust, and star-pilgrimages," to use Emerson's phrase, were not just "there"; they were getting ready to be the home of living things; and the lower forms of life were regarded as pointers-

forward to higher forms. Again to borrow from the Concord "prophet of the soul,"

> And the poor worm shall plot and plan
> What it will do when it is man.

A recent declaration by a number of eminent men, some of them on the highest round of the scientific ladder, that the evolutionary view of nature ennobles the thought of God is historically true at least; the event has occurred. In short, the atmospheric change was not toward the depression of a sultry day but toward the invigoration of a fresh, appetite-creating breeze.

The sophistic that turned this into an alleged depletion of our moral vim is not far to seek. The reason why certain persons did not rejoice at the excuses that evolution provides for much of our faultiness is that they did not want us to be excused, but condemned. They wanted this, not because they were vicious, but because they held a theology that required them to think so. And because this authoritative theology had settled upon one way as the only one whereby man could be released from the sins that beset him, it could not rejoice to discover that there are other openers of prison doors.

If many of the dogmatically faithful did not think their way into quite all this detail, they realized at least that to accept at the hands of evolution an ennobled view of man or of God would involve admitting inadequacy and lack of true authority in the dogmatic system. The dogmas never were complimentary to human nature, but—O droll self-delusion—when science offered us a real compliment, dogma insisted that it was an insult to our exalted dignity!

V

THE IRRATIONALITY OF MAN AS A LITERARY MOTIF

"What a noble work is man!" is a characteristic sentiment of classical English literature. "What a work is man!" is the burden of the most distinctive literature of our day. The difference between the two exclamations is the difference between sunshine with clouds and clouds without sunshine.

Our literature always has had rogues and villains galore, hypocrites and egotists, folly in good people and goodness in bad people. Human life and human nature have been pictured as spotted and mixed-up, and strife and confusion have not always been cleared up in the dénouement. But this was a mixture, a confusion, and a strife, of genuine opposites. That there are truly noble motives was not doubted; it was, indeed, the entanglements of nobility in a world that contains also stupidity, selfishness, sensuality, and cruelty that furnished the main dramatic situations, whether between individuals or within an individual's own soul.

The same objective material receives in our day a fundamentally different treatment. That we have fewer "happy endings" is not the main point, and it is not necessarily significant. What is significant is a shift of the main basis of dramatic contrasts and oppositions, and the insertion of a new set of tensions, together with the assumption, or the mood, that lies back of the change.

Whereas, our classical tradition opposed moral ugliness or weakness to moral beauty or strength, the new mode is not certain that there are any such dividing lines in our experience. It finds in life, rather, a mêlée of impulses in which there intermingles more or less policing that imagines itself to be of superior quality but is actually part and parcel of the mêlée. In the instincts a literary bonanza has been discovered. Pit them against one another; tangle them up; make them intense and ruthless to the point of savagery or beastliness, or make them crafty and adroitly unscrupulous; ignore the presence in the world of religious aspiration, or, better still, expose it as a self-deceived servitor of the powers that it would rule—in short, play irrationality against irrationality, some of it deceiving itself by its own camouflage, and you will be up to date.

If this literature cannot paint with epic strokes because its theme, man, lacks heroic proportions, it does create a complicated and many-patterned chiaroscuro that, I am ready to believe, is a real contribution to literary technic. But whatever virtues or vices of technical art one may find here (which is not my concern), the inlooks are disillusioning. Even if the lines do not say so, you will find it between the lines. It permeates the assumptions of the characters or, if it does not, it suffuses the plot, governing the choice of characters, situations, incidents, developments; it is testified to by atmosphere, perspective, and very effectively by silences. If, as sometimes happens in current plots as well as in classic tragedy, Fate is the chief actor, it is not sublimely grand or even mysterious, giving the spectator a feeling that even the irremediable ills of life are a tribute to the greatness and dignity of existence, but a mean Fate

(rather, fate), a mere mechanical determinism in the sphere of desire. The spectator goes away unawed, unadmiring, untrustful toward his species. Life is a mole that burrows under the garden of our ideals, nipping off at the roots one plant after another. Or, life is a firecracker; a glittering splutter, then an explosion or a fizzle, then fragments of smoking refuse—nothing but combustion.

It is far from the purpose of this characterization to indulge in any general literary criticism, or completely to assess the movement now in question. The only reason for alluding to it is that here, in a clearly influential portion of current writing, the disillusionment now under consideration is a ruling presence. The spirit of it is displayed in fiction, drama, poetry, and biography. It is bent upon stripping off the disguises of men, puncturing their pride, and revealing them as creatures of elemental, a-moral, not-to-be-denied impulses. Now and then an impression of power is conveyed by the sheer intensity or explosiveness of an instinctive desire, but anon human wants appear narrow, mean, vulgar, or sordid. "Spoon River" and "Main Street!" Authors psychologizing, just as diplomats do, with hard cynicism. And this cynicism is not intended as caricature, with its precious privilege of telling the truth by exaggeration, nor satire, isolating foibles in order to put them into the pillory; the literature in question intends to present the actuality of human life as against the conventionalized dreaming of the Victorian period.

Two or three examples may be adduced for the sake of concreteness. A reviewer gives the following exposition of the philosophy of life that actuates Mr. Dreiser's novels: "To him it seemed . . . that novelists, . . . enamoured of moral delicacy and

psychological subtleties, . . . had forgotten the simple motives by which the vast majority of mankind are moved; so with a single shrug he sloughed off once and for all the implications of the theory that man is primarily a moral animal, and he did this much as the behaviorists in psychology sloughed off the soul. He adopted, instead, what he called 'a theory of animal conduct.'" The leading character in Dreiser's "An American Tragedy," the reviewer goes on to say, "is not unaware of the moral precepts which his parents have inculcated, nor is he unmoved by the thought of another's pain. But these things are pale shadows in comparison with needs and lusts which are nourished, not by ideas and habits, but by blood. They may go forth to battle but they never win; they may haunt the mind like overtones or like ghosts but they never direct a crucial action. . . . At no point in all the vast and closely woven story does any motive based upon moral, social, or religious abstractions count" (Joseph Wood Krutch in the *Nation*, Feb. 10, 1926, p. 152).

The same writer of analytic reviews calls Eugene O'Neill's "The Great God Brown" a "passionate attempt to expound the mystery of the artist's maladjustment and of that perpetual tendency of his to slide into the mud while aspiring toward the stars. Its hero, . . . unhappy himself, . . . has been the cause of unhappiness in others, and when he dies he knows no more than that he has lived. . . . He has not seen the face of either God or Devil clearly enough to know which was which, and it is with curses that he has uttered the sincerest of his prayers. . . . The thirteen scenes . . . are thirteen dancing stars still molten and fluid like the chaos from which they sprung. They are moments in the life of a man

described in a brilliantly poetic sentence as one who 'had looked into his own dark and was afraid'; and they are thus, it is difficult not to believe, fragmentary confessions from that dramatist who has peered more intently than any of his countrymen at the fantastic shadows cast by reality upon the walls of the dark cavern which is the self" (Same number of the *Nation*, pp. 164 f.).

A less tempestuous form of disillusionment appears in the (would-be-bestowed) Pulitzer Prize novel, Sinclair Lewis's "Arrowsmith." The main action takes place upon the plane, not of brawling passions, but of the supposably rational life. Most persons of intelligence assume that, however mixed or fragile the values of other undertakings may be, scientific research is a truly noble and profoundly worthwhile type of human conduct. Very well, says the author of "Arrowsmith," let us look at the thing in actual operation in our present world. Are you carried away by the researcher's dispassionate objectivity and his passionate devotion to truth? In fact, this dispassionate passion is in a constantly losing fight with enemies both within and without the researcher.

For, first, since research must be cooperative and organized, institutionalism seizes the opportunity to lay the long fingers of its dead hand upon every condition and plan. Next, vulgar utility, because it purveys the physical sustenance of science, craftily opens and closes the doors through which the researcher has to walk. Then, the mixed motives of the individuals with whom the researcher must be associated—the desire for recognition in the scientific world, the desire for quick results, or for official position—insinuate themselves like sand in the cog-

wheels of a fine mechanism. Humanitarianism, with its well-meaning desire promptly to relieve distress, throws its arms around the neck of plain truth-seeking and drags it under the waves of popular clamor or applause. Even within the mind of the researcher, there is no real peace nor unity. Anger and impatience, plain sex-instinct, and even domestic virtues entangle his interests and divert him from the straight line of loyalty to his scientific aspirations. At times uncertainty seizes him as to whether the near-by values of efficiency as the world measures it be not greater, in fact, than the far values of fundamental truth.

Thus is pictured the life of reason at its intellectual climax. This is the focus of the story, but not the whole of it. Around the central character cluster varied types of life-history, but every type is either self-contradictory, or consistently shallow, or inadequate because of its unwise goodness. Not less than in the rabble of instincts in O'Neill's "Desire Under the Elms," but only in a different manner, and on a more refined level, man is the victim of himself. The idea is pursued with both continuity and subtlety. With continuity because it pervades the minor as well as the major characters and incidents of the plot; with subtlety because over-simplification of motives is skilfully avoided. The finer qualities are presented as fine and sincere even though the life within which they occur be smitten with ultimate futility. There is, indeed, biting cynicism for virtues that are cold and calculating, but not for warm, impulsive goodness.

But nobody arrives at any destination. As reason fails to guide the researcher to his desired haven, so also instinctive wholesomeness fails of its goal. The

one deeply lovable person in the entire story would have demonstrated, if anyone could do it under the presuppositions of the author, that life can achieve a worth-while destiny otherwise than through knowledge. Leora is natural, spontaneous, affectionate; she makes adjustments by simple directness of feeling without artifice or ambition; though she has no discernible philosophy of life, she is dependable; on the whole, she seems to be contented. But her simplicity is that of narrowness, not of comprehension; she achieves adaptation but not mastery of her situations, and in the end her lack of any real understanding of the scientific habits and standards of her husband overwhelms them both in a needless tragedy.

Everywhere is frustration by inherent, unchangeable defects; yet no tears, no pathos (for there is no "might have been"); the irrational is both foreground and background. A surd in every experience would not necessarily mean defeat if there were any self-sustaining meanings also. But if our supposed meanings turn out to be surds!

There shines in the earlier parts of the story the steady brilliance of one ideal, that of unswerving devotion to pure science—wanting to know the exact truth at all costs. This ideal is incarnated in a sturdy-willed, growly old priest of the laboratory from whom young men of science catch the holy flame. They, one and all, allow it to flicker and smolder; some of them let it go out; but for a long time the old priest's light burns steadily on. The reader half believes that here, for just once, rationality is to vindicate itself. At last there comes to the veteran researcher an opportunity to guard research, and to extend it, by administering a research institution that possesses abundant funds. Unknowing that his

motives are mixed and contradictory, he accepts the fatal advancement, becomes compromised, and is lost. As a symbol of his descent the novelist makes him sink into senile dementia. "Vanity of vanities! . . . All is vanity."

How much has this literary exploitation of the irrational in man had to do with the disillusionment that has been spreading among us? Have we here chiefly a cause, or chiefly an effect? If a cause, is it a major or a minor one? In any case we have a symptom or diagnostic fact. Disillusionment has gone far enough to be represented in a considerable body of literature that cannot be ignored. Whatever much-read novels and much-witnessed plays reveal concerning a people or an age is here revealed; whatever they do to people is being done here and now.

The suggestibleness of human beings is too great to leave them unaffected by such presentations of the supposed realities of life; this literature certainly is furthering disillusionment. But as a secondary cause. The primary cause is something actual that sets these literary workers going and then provides the popular applause. The applauders have had some sort of experience that makes the picture seem to have some versimilitude. Thus we are forced back to the question, What makes this literature plausible? What has gotten into our common life that tends to make us think meanly of ourselves, and that causes us, particularly, to take our wants as a continuous and never to be resolved squabble among our desires?

Whatever it is, undoubtedly it is the same thing that we came upon in the "I told you so" of the war psychology. In all probability it is so commonplace that ordinarily it is not noticed, or if it is noticed, is taken as a to-be-expected expression of the nature

of things. When a world-catastrophe shakes us, we begin to wake up to the assumptions that we have so easily fallen into, and when they appear in a new literature, we say that it is revealing—as it is. But of just what? The professed derivation of this interpretation of life from psychology suggests that we look in this direction for further light upon our problem.

VI

HAS PSYCHOLOGY UNDERMINED OUR SELF-RESPECT?

The Sphinx attends a meeting of the Psychological Sodality.

The Chairman of the Meeting:

Brothers—er, er, Brothers and Sisters: We have the pleasure, I may say even the honor, of having as our guest this evening a most venerable member, if not of our inmost circle (which is not yet venerable itself, having the age of only a generation), yet a member of the long and honorable succession of inquirers into what is, perhaps, the most difficult problem that has engaged the scientific intellect—the problem of the nature of man. I say "perhaps" the most difficult problem, for we who have observed the reactions of the white rat are aware how, under the rub of exact research, man disappears, like vanishing cream, in the pores of "the organism." I am reminded of this with peculiar force upon the present occasion because our distinguished guest, like our laboratories, combines the human and the sub-human in a single synthesis. Renowned for her cautious judgment, she is yet more illustrious for her skill in the formulation of problems. Let me assure her that the members of this Sodality will have open ears for her questions, and that we shall be glad to focus upon them the combined and unified results of our respec-

tive lines of research. Fellow Members, I present The Sphinx!

THE SPHINX:

Your Chairman does me too great honor when he says that I combine the upper and the lower part of me in a single synthesis. The fact is that the two parts of me never have lived together in harmony. The trouble is with my head. It's forever saying, "I'm human, but what is it to be human?" and this keeps the whole of me in turmoil. I've been asking this question for thousands of years, and asking it is as far as ever I get. Tough luck; but not as bad as trying to answer questions that you don't know how to ask. Believe me, asking the right question is the greatest discovery anybody ever makes; it's the high-trapeze act of the whole scientific circus. It makes me tired—I've been too tired to stir for as much as five thousand years—to hear philosophers, and preachers, and guides of youth "explain" the mystery of human existence by prating of ghosts, and souls, and faculties that always are just around the corner and never where you can get your eyes upon them (Applause). It all comes about from asking the wrong question. In this instance, it's the mud-pie question: What's it made of? This question plays the very deuce. By the way, all of you guys are done with mud pies, I suppose? I haven't seen the last number of your Annals.

A PRACTICING PSYCHOLOGIST:

May I introduce myself to our distinguished speaker by explaining that I am a certified practicing psychologist? From the point of view of my profession the question that has been put to us is readily

answered: We are done with mud pies. We are not at all concerned to know whether man is made out of the dust of the ground or out of the breath of divinity. Our job is simply to enable men to control, manage, and manipulate themselves and one another so as to get what they want with the greatest certainty and the least expense. And we have had no mean success in this job. If a child is backward in school, we find out why, and we tell the teacher what to do. We have evolved technics for advertising that increase sales, whip up competition, and compel combination. We can tell you how to manage salespeople or factory operatives so that both they and their foremen will be happier, the output will increase, and dividends will grow. It was a technic that we devised that enabled our officials at Washington to do the people's thinking for them during the War while the people supposed all the time that they were doing their own thinking. Psychology is what psychology does.

THE SPHINX:

You're just the pin in a haymow that I've been looking for ever since Bacchus went on his first spree! Nothing else has puzzled me half as much as this phase of my old question, namely: What do human beings want? Since the management of minds is your specialty, practice on me; tell me how I can manage my head or the minds of men so as to find out what would really satisfy a human being.

PRACTICING PSYCHOLOGIST:

I did not say that the practicing psychologist knows the whole anatomy of man's desires. For the most part he takes the word of his clients as to what

they want, and then goes ahead. I simply do not ask what other demands of human nature may possibly exist. At the same time I must admit that, in order to find the economical way to handle the human factor in any situation, I must always take account of a complex of instincts. The farther I go in my work, too, the more complicated the instincts appear to be. For example, we are discovering that the workman wants out of his work a great many things besides wages, even things that wages won't buy. As yet, however, we are not sure that the capitalist (except a queer one now and then) desires anything but profits. The acquisitive instinct seems completely to explain the conduct of business.

A Biological Psychologist:

What has just been said illustrates the need of an inclusive point of view from which to approach the problem of the instincts. Biology, in its concept of adjustment, presents us with such a point of view. All living beings exhibit a push towards the maintenance and the reproduction of themselves. Thus, there are two great trunk-roots of behavior, the demand for self-maintenance (at base the requirement of food), and the demand for reproduction. Where reproduction is sexual, we may say that food and sex, broadly considered, contain the clue to all behavior. It is necessary, of course, to perceive that each of these trunk-roots divides into branches and subdivides into rootlets. Thus, food-getting includes accumulation for future use, and so it founds what is sometimes called the acquisitive instinct. Rivalry, jealousy, and pugnacity belong to the same trunk-root. On the other hand, the reproductive drive differentiates into complex activities of courtship, the care of

offspring, the family organization, and all the social institutions that have sprung from it.

THE SPHINX:

You puzzle me. I haven't been hungry or amorous since the pyramids were built, and I know I never wanted offspring. The only thing I've really wanted for these thousands of years is to know what man is —that is, what he really wants. At this minute I'm all excited about a particular aspect of this general question of mine: Does man himself, or only this queer head of mine, want to know what he wants? And if so, of which of the two trunk-roots of instinct is this a rootlet?

AN ANALYTICAL PSYCHOLOGIST:

The question just asked by our venerable friend reinforces a consideration that I have many times presented in our Sodality. Psychology cannot be satisfied to work within the very broad categories of biology; she must find her categories within the specific material with which she deals, and she must pursue her analyses to the end—that is, until the simple elements are laid bare. Pursuing this truly scientific procedure, she finds that mind is a general term for aggregates of sense-elements on the one hand and elementary drives on the other. These drives, inherited, of course, and having biological significance, are more numerous than we once supposed. Each of the so-called trunk-roots is in reality a cluster of roots, and there are others not contained in either cluster. The sex-instinct knows nothing of offspring; does not look forward to progeny nor provide care for the young—often quite the opposite. These things are managed by another set of instincts.

Moreover, food-getting is not the only sort of instinctive getting. Curiosity, the prime root of science, is obviously instinctive. Therefore we may affirm that the trouble with The Sphinx's head is the unrest of an unsatisfied instinct.

A Single-Track Behaviorist:

This makes me as tired as it must make The Sphinx. Instincts, forsooth! An instinct is nothing but a name for a class of responses; it does not do anything nor explain anything. You can have as many or as few instincts as you like by choosing your method of classifying behavior. In fact, the whole notion that desires, instinctive or other, explain the occurrence of anything is simply a left-over from the belief in flitting ghosts who did things in the dark but never where you could see just what was happening. Bring the facts into the light, and what do you see (for I know nothing but what I see and touch)? You behold in our behavior nothing whatever but a few reflex movements modified in numerous ways by the conditions, purely physical, under which they occur. Behavior, which is change of place, has to be explained from within its own genus, which is, change of place. This is the last mountain height of psychology; climb up here, and you shall see that there are no desires, no wants. Men don't want anything; a want is nothing but a bit of vocal or sub-vocal behavior.

The Sphinx:

Professor, you are a man after my own heart. You make things so simple. From what you say I get a hunch that maybe I have been foolish to be so inquisitive. For thousands of years I have believed

that I was asking my big question about man because I wanted an answer. You make it clear that I didn't ask because I desired an answer, or anything else, but only because I liked to ask questions. Come to think of it—it's plain as a wart on a nose—I couldn't ask a question *because* of anything. In fact, it was not questions, but movements of my lips, that occurred. I've just been kidding myself, and I don't need to worry any more about what goes on in this head of mine. I really don't want an answer, and I don't want to ask questions. Still, I should like to know what the rest of you fellows think about this.

A Gestalt-Psychologist:

The latest experiments upon both men and lower animals fail to justify any of the theories that man's mind or his behavior is a composite of elements. The behavior of men, of chimpanzees, and even of domestic hens displays types of organization that cannot be explained as conditioned reflexes, or instinctive pushes, or associations of sense-elements. The organization is there when the response first occurs, not merely afterwards, and new organizations appear within new responses. The unit for psychology is the configuration, which is not a simple element. We are not composites of any kind of elements; we do not merely repeat and recombine old reactions; our behavior, through and through, looks forward to the organized world in which we live. I find the question of The Sphinx, therefore, not only rational, but inevitable. The supreme problem of psychology is: Whither? What are these already organized wholes that we recognize as mind? How and in what direction do they grow, and what are they going

towards? Applied to man, the question is, What does this species really want?

A Self-Psychologist:

The circle is returning into itself! Psychology took its start—it always does so—from the experience of being a conscious self. This is the prime datum; it is the concrete actuality, from which all your alleged "elements," sensory, affective, or instinctive, are derived by abstraction. Mind, as the Gestalt-Psychologist says, is a self-organizing object. Its activity, wherever you find it, is purposive striving. I should say that what ails the Sphinx's head is simply the painful effort to become a complete self.

The Sphinx:

Thank you! You have saved my self-respect, and . . .

A Psychoanalyst:

Pardon me, not too fast! Don't respect yourself until you find out whether you are respectable, and above all, don't rationalize. I am sure that you will welcome this interruption when I tell you that I am dealing daily with the dynamics of human conduct in its most intimate phases, so intimate that people cannot even recognize them as their own without my help. I walk among the mud-geysers and the volcanoes that show what's really inside. What men think they want—in fact, most of what you psychologists think they want—isn't what they really want, for the most part, but a lot of deceptive substitutes for what men really want and have failed to get. Dig down into the Unconscious, and you shall find libido, the simple spring that turns all the wheels of the machine. It

is sex-desire broadly considered, though some would say desire to exalt the ego, or desire just to live (of which sex-desire is, of course, the chief constituent). Because these desires are repressed by social conventions, they seek outlets in strange and deceptive ways, and thus what we call our character becomes chiefly a mass of self-deluded virtues and self-deluded faults. Now, this restless longing of The Sphinx, which she thinks is a genuine desire to know what man is, conceals . . .

SEVERAL VOICES:
Mr. Chairman! Mr. Chairman, I . . .

THE CHAIRMAN:
Brethren, every member of this Sodality knows exactly what every other member is about to say. Would it not be well, instead of listening to ourselves, to hear the comments of our honored guest?

THE SPHINX:
I won't admit, no I won't, that this discussion has given me a headache. I want you to think me more hard-headed than that, and moreover I might unwittingly reveal something in my insides that would shock the Psychoanalyst. All I can say, in view of your hospitality, is this: When you find out what you want, I hope you'll one and all get what you want, provided you care to have that kind of want. As for me, the next steamer back to Egypt, where I shall brood over these things, perhaps, for a few more thousand years.[1]

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[1] Reprinted, with modifications, from RELIGIOUS EDUCATION, January, 1928, pp. 62-65.

To the question whether modern psychology has undermined our self-respect a partial reply would be, as we now see, Which modern psychology? One psychology is pitted against another whenever the nature of our motives is in question. Here science has problems rather than solutions, points of view rather than a point of view.

Only a small proportion of the populace, moreover, reads scientific psychology. Not by any logical use of established conclusions of research, then, has the present disillusionment reached its wide extent. We are dealing with a mood or sentiment and a habit into which men have slipped, not with insight that they have achieved by intellectual labor.[1]

Undoubtedly psychological rumors that have trickled into town have had an influence. Everybody who has an articulate desire to be modern is thinking about human nature in terms that he supposes to be those of the psychologist. In particular, three propositions have attained some vogue: That men are moved by the same instincts as the lower species; that instinctive conduct is mechanically determined; and that the reasons conventionally given for conduct are mostly sophistical "rationalizations" (that is, merely supposed reasons for that which in reality is determined by emotion rather than thought). These ideas give support to the current mood, but they cannot have had much to do with creating it. As here used, they are themselves "rationalizations." The basis of the mood is some form of common or at least wide-spread experience. No great ground-swell of

[1] In the present section I endeavor to show merely what psychology has contributed to this mood. In due time (Section II) I shall discuss in a direct manner the present status of the psychology of motivation, asking what really is established.

popular sentiment ever originated from anything else.

Indeed, can we reasonably assume that the wind blows in only one direction—from psychology to popular opinion, but not from the popular mood into the psychology laboratory? Surely psychologists are human, which is to say that we need a psychology of their psychologizing. Here is an item of it: (1) The area that one chooses for investigation; (2) The questions that one asks; (3) The facts that one notices or fails to notice; (4) The values that are noticed in the work of another; and (5) The apparent size of the sphere within which one acts—all these are influenced by some interest then and there present. Now, interest can be awakened in all sorts of ways. The spirit of the times can shunt research onto this track or that, and it can make this datum or that prominent in the mind of the researcher.

It is easy, in fact, to trace to their origin several of the dominant interests of psychology. Thus it struggled for scientific standing at a period when "science" connoted, most clearly of all, physical science; at a time when the biological concept of evolution filled the sky; at a time when it was necessary, in order to be let alone, to seem not to meddle with theological interests; and, above all, at a time when industrialism was rushing swiftly towards its present climax. We shall do no despite to science nor to any of its devotees if we say that there is a subtle connection between the dominance of machinery in our civilization, the prominence of a machine-like view of motivation in many works on psychology, and the predilection of the popular mood for just this idea of human nature.

VII

ACCORDING TO INDUSTRIALISM, WHAT IS MAN?

An ancient poet celebrated the greatness of man in the following glowing words:

O Lord our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! Who hast set thy glory above the heavens. . . .
When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained,
What is man, that thou art mindful of him? And the son of man, that thou visitest him?
For thou hast made him a little lower than the gods, and hast crowned him with glory and honor.
Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet:
All sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field;
The fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea.

"Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands." Simple-minded poet, son of herdsman, hunter, or fisherman, you think man is great because he domesticates sheep and oxen, and is successful in his hunting and fishing—so great that even the maker of the heavens regards him as important! What would you say if you could witness the conquests of nature that have followed upon modern science and invention? You might ride in a car that is propelled, heated, and lighted by a river a hundred miles away; you might speak in your natural voice at Jerusalem and be heard in Egypt; with a turn of

a hand you could start moving a mass that a thousand of your Palestinian oxen could not budge.

How is it that this enormous increase in our dominion over nature adds so little to our appreciation of man? Nay, that it makes us less appreciative than this rustic?

The answer will be found in some phase of the process of securing this dominion, or in some use made of it. Outside of industrialism, in fact, the obvious trend of history is towards a higher and higher estimate of human nature. The growth of civil and political liberty; the spread of popular education; emancipation from many superstitious fears; the increase of humanitarianism—what a truly glorious period in human evolution do these witness. And yet, in spite of them all, a depressed view of ourselves hangs heavy in the atmosphere. We have canvassed all the more obvious partial causes of it, only to be pointed in every instance towards our everyday occupations as the more important source.

What is industrialism doing to us, then? Under this term may be included for convenience the entire system by which, in the period of steam and electric power—still a short one—goods are produced and distributed, and commerce and finance are carried on. This system, originating in the West but now spreading to the Orient, reorganizes human relationships in a manner that is almost revolutionary. It shifts populations from place to place; it dissolves old connections, and creates new ones, separating men who were together, and bringing together those who were strangers; it produces a large-scale consciousness of one another—ultimately, it seems, an almost feverish consciousness—but without ever making the reorganization of human relations any

part of its main business. That is, the all-absorbing industrial system is not organized and run with reference to its main output, a changed humanity; we are not in business, as has been said, for our health; and this inversion of values, at first not clearly foreseen, or intended as a philosophy of life (but only practised), is now becoming a clearly conscious and, in the Western world, a generally accepted interpretation of our own worth. We are taking our occupations seriously.

It is hard for us who are most close to the facts to see them in perspective. We are rarely conscious of the human movement in the large because the whole immediate human environment moves with us. But Oriental observers like Tagore and Gandhi perceive that Western civilization is developing towards a world-tragedy—pigmy purposes wielding the power of giants. It may be that we shall be jarred into something wiser by the jolts that are occurring within the machine itself. For the human factor is increasingly the problem-setting item in the industrial system. All the other sources of difficulty—the weather, the changes of the seasons, the supply of raw materials, the chemistry of industrial processes, the control of elemental forces—all these taken together occasion less anxious thought than the question, What can we rely upon in the sphere of human conduct? The puzzle of organization is personnel; the nightmare of the employer is labor; the riddle of labor is organized capital and its instrument, the manager and the boss; at the spear-point of practically every enterprise appears the opposing spearhead of sharper and sharper competition. Experience of friction is leading to modifications of mechanical processes and some improvements in human relations.

But meantime, there goes on, by virtue of the inner logic of the system as a whole, an increasing depression of spirit, an increasing skepticism of the worth of human motives in their totality.

Let not our question be confused with others. We are not asking whether the industrial system breeds injustice; not even what sorts of men it produces by this or that particular method of "handling" men. Our sole interest at this point is in the notions concerning the motives of men that spring up, or receive emphasis and currency, by virtue of the general characteristics of the system. Some wariness is advisable here, for the field is not entirely homogeneous, and (as we shall see more fully in a later section) motives are mixed and more or less misunderstood. That industrialism is producing, and, until it becomes greatly modified, must produce, a depressed view of man, however, is a safe proposition. For no one will question that there is in it a kind of gravitation towards the following specific judgments:

(*a*) That in the organization and the use of capital the dominant motive, almost invariably taken for granted, is not the glory of God (however this be understood), nor the improvement of human life (one's own or others'), nor supplying the wants of men, but accumulation of profits and of power for the enjoyment of the possessor, or of the possessor and his family.

(*b*) That among the employed classes the dominant attitude with respect to the relations between employer and employe is to get the most possible for the least return; and that a corresponding attitude on the part of employers is taken as a matter of course.

(*c*) That, since conflict is of the essence of indus-

trialism—competition of capitalist with capitalist, of laborer with laborer, and chronic strains between capital and labor—an essentially pugnacious self-interest is fundamental to human nature; consequently, that the natural, to-be-expected policy of all concerned is to obtain compulsory power over others.

(*d*) That insincerity permeates the whole—insincerity in that, though every one is for himself, everybody endeavors to make it appear that what he wants is for the good of the others. Thus, men actually ascribe virtue to themselves because their occupation supplies some human want, though these same men confess that their motive is profits, and that they ignore wants that it is less profitable to supply. "The public good" is known to be a continual excuse for economic partizanship in laws, administration, and politics generally. Under the guise of patriotism, self-interest pursues world-policies that make for economic imperialism, unfairness to weaker peoples, and war. Each struggling class, laborers and employers alike, conceals from the public the narrower, more partizan phases of its activities. It is not necessary to suppose that all this is entirely conscious, or that all men are equally paralysed in their moral nature by this poison. Let us give the benefit of the doubt wherever we can. But indubitably our industrial system creates a belief that our life is thus honeycombed with insincerity.

These, let it be repeated, are not a portrait, but only certain selected features; they do not fully describe any situation; they do not constitute an accusation of depravity. But no one who impartially surveys the human relationships that most characterize industrialism can deny that the impressions

that have been described are being made by it, and are being believed with increasing generality.

If we ask how this factor in the present disillusionment compares with the others—the Great War, the belief in evolution, the literature of irrationality, general psychology, behaviorism, and psychoanalysis —we shall conclude that it is more influential than all of them put together. The reason is not merely that the War covered only a few short years, whereas experience with the industrial system is more than a century old; and not merely that science and literature reach only a portion of the population; there is a still deeper reason for the profound influence of industrialism upon our conception of ourselves. Wherever our voluntary activities, our efforts and struggles, are chiefly expended, there we get our deepest impressions as to the nature of reality. Men who through life spend from eight to ten of their freshest hours each day in the economic struggle tend to become conformed in their personal attitudes to the facts and forces with which and against which they work. They surely become conformed unless they take part in efforts to change the system. We do not understand even the pleasures of the people until we inspect their labor; the same is true of family life, and—more than we suspect—of religion.

Not only is industrialism the chief of several sources of our disillusionment; it is the background source that either produces or gives popular plausibility to the others. It produced the War; it aggravates all the general problems of the family and of sex-life; it intensifies everything that makes us distrust one another and everything that makes us content to be selfish. Industrial efficiency practically identifies itself with a mechanization of life that

leaves the least possible scope for the exercise of thought, and choice, and personality. When release from work comes, the imprisoned vitality of the worker gushes into a kind of freedom that gives one an impression that the real basis of life is simply instinct. If, as some suppose, a flood of sexuality has descended upon us, the reason will be found, not chiefly in psychoanalysis, but in such conditions of modern life as the industrial city. Granted industrialism, ramifying into the home, the people's recreations, politics and law; industrialism, growing more and more efficient according to its self-secreted standard of efficiency, what should one expect but disillusionment as to the worth of human motives? "Gentlemen," said a college president to some students who were bibulously inclined, "there is one thing in this world that you can rely upon—the morning head!"

If one cares to listen for a coda to the harsh symphony of industrialism, one can discern it in many sorts of effort to reassure oneself of one's goodness. Promoters of one of our enormous wastes, competitive advertising, will tell you that strict truth-telling is one of the standards of their profession; and one can see them measuring the moral worth of the profession by this one minor consideration. When big business is under fire because of its exploitation of both employe and consumer, we are told that business is growing more moral because competitors treat one another more honorably. We need not scent hypocrisy in the welfare work of great factories, but why should kindness to dependents be offered as an offset to objections to this very sort of dependence? Rotarians are helping their communities in various ways from unquestionably good motives; I should be

sorry if any word of mine discounted their interest, say, in boys; but why should business men think that such extra-business activities reflect any credit upon the system or have any claim to soften the criticisms that are directed against it? What we perceive here is men who are better, and want to be counted as better, than the system that has caught them and victimized them.

But these "rationalizations," if such they be, are less portentous than the infiltration of the principles of industrialism into the ethics that is generally recognized as obligatory. The major emphases in current practical ethics are the emphases that will not hurt the system. They center chiefly about two poles, property and contracts. It is well recognized that the American system of law is organized chiefly around property as the basic right, and at least one eminent public man has declared that unless we can somehow amend this foundation-principle it will get us into no end of trouble. Now, this assumption as to basic legal obligation has passed insensibly into an assumption as to moral obligation and moral character, with ironic results in our current moral judgments. Compare, for example, the intense reprobation of an embezzler with the entire respectability of a manufacturer who grows wealthy out of factory labor by children. He has not stolen property from children! Compare, again, our attitude toward dishonesty in making and fulfilling a contract with our attitude toward employers who have resisted with might and main every measure, whether proposed by a labor union or in a legislature, to safeguard the health of factory operatives. They are men of their word! Ask the next hundred men you meet what are the ethical obligations of business, or of employers,

or of employees, or of buyers and sellers; you will not hear from five of them, probably not from one, a word about obligations other than the formal ones of honesty, respect for property, and fulfilment of contracts. The main issues—what property is for, what the main aim of production is, what constitutes success, the fundamental immorality of treating persons as mere means rather than ends—will not be mentioned. You may possibly receive from some church member a Scripture verse, "Love your neighbor as yourself"; but what do you think he will mean by it? Will he mean governing the main aims and processes of the economic life by this principle? Do you really think he will?

VIII

THE DILEMMA OF CHRISTIANITY

The relation of the dominant religion of the West —the garden-plot of industrialism—to these depressed views of the motives of men is as odd as it is complicated. The tradition of official Christianity has run to the effect that the heart of man is desperately wicked; that it is selfish, sensual, and self-deceived; and that it is incapable of improving itself until an infusion of divine power has made possible, first repentance, then a new life.

Like the melancholy tolling of a bell, our War experience, our popular psychologies, our popular literature, and our everyday economic occupations repeat after religion that, under the surface, we are a madhouse of clamant impulses, and that we have no power to become anything else. How, we may ask, does theology like this confirmation of itself?

Not too well! And for interesting reasons. Within the memory of men now living the evangelical churches were strenuously combating the notion that man is naturally good; today, when popular thought is inclined to classify human nature with that of the beasts, the same churches are exerting themselves to assert the natural nobility and dignity of the human race, and its unique significance in the order of nature. Just what has brought about this change of front? And how deep down does it go?

Secondary reasons for this change need not here

be enumerated, as, for example, the modification of theological thought from within by its own re-examination of its historical bases. For a great about-face of popular religious consciousness never takes place at the command of historical scholarship but only at the command of a pervasive experience. In this instance, the pervasive experience that dominates religious thought lies precisely in the area that we already have had under consideration.

The doctrine that man's nature is evil had as its counterpart and counterweight (partly relieving it of its gruesomeness) the dogma that divine grace, acting through the Scriptures and the church, is able (and some said, is ever ready,) to take away the evil desires and fill their place with good. Now, it would be intolerable to the churches to think so ill of man's original nature unless the actuality of regeneration also could be believed in. But—here is the rub—living belief in regeneration could not be maintained upon biblical grounds or upon authority alone; it had to be made manifest in the common life to common men.

In order to retain the doctrine of depravity under such modern conditions as freedom of thought, popular education, and greatly widened acquaintance with humanity, a three-fold demonstration would have been necessary:

First, it would have been necessary to exhibit a great and evident contrast between the daily lives of those who experienced and those who did not experience the asserted special infusion of divine power. If the doctrine was true, some experience here and now, not merely in the hereafter, had to separate men into sheep and goats.

Second, it would have been necessary to exhibit a regenerate church as an organ of world-regeneration. Not necessarily an infallible church; not necessarily an organization

perfect in its constitution and free from foibles in its administration, but at least one clearly discriminable from all other social institutions by the intensity, the continuity, and the independence of a superior motive.

Third, it would have been necessary to demonstrate the reversal of human nature's evil traits socially as well as individually, and outside the church as well as inside it. In particular, the "new creature" would have had to appear within the structure of the industrial order. Not that any sudden or complete conversion of the industrial order is here implied, but at least some recognizable beginning, some certain evidence that the process of industrial regeneration is starting. Feeding those who are left hungry by the economic machine, or binding up the wounds of those who have been hurt by it, or soothing the asperities of the industrial warfare, is not enough; the required demonstration had to reach and modify the central motives that give to the system its specific character. Unless objective evidence could be adduced that the kingdom of property, profits, wealth, and wages can be transformed into a Kingdom of God—not, of course, by charitable distribution of a surplus, but by shifting the main direction—then nothing could keep alive the doctrine of regeneration.

In not one of these directions have the churches made a convincing showing to the world at large or even to themselves. It is true that evangelism has turned many an individual permanently from evil ways—a fact that is today strangely understressed by the churches, and not sufficiently followed up in work with individuals. But evangelism at its best has always left us in a condition of strain, with evangelism's own chosen problem not really solved. For the converted man turns out to be, like his unregenerate neighbor, a mixture of yeses and noes; and, with dismaying frequency—dismaying, that is, for the doctrine of depravity-removed-by-regeneration—the fruits of the Spirit have been abundant in the supposably unregenerate and scanty in the supposably

regenerate. The point is not that conversion, if it is to back up the doctrine, must make a man perfect at a clip, but that it must make him sufficiently different to enable observers to identify him as actually different, in point of dominant motives, from men who have been trained otherwise than by the church.

In the current sense of evangelism, of conversion, of regeneration, or—most generally—of being a Christian, there is no generally recognized implication of incongruity with the accepted motivation of industrialism. I do not say that being a Christian even in the conventional sense does not somewhat moderate the selfishness of this motivation; sometimes a Christian industrialist is made superbly inconsistent by his religion. The point is that Christians, like anybody else, are expected to live out their workaday lives within industrialism upon its own terms. And industrialism is playing spiritual havoc!

A regenerate church, accordingly, is non-existent. This means, not that unregenerate individuals slip into membership; not that a united church is still merely hoped for; not that there is no insurance against corruption in any ecclesiastical body, local or general. It means, rather, that no church is definitely committed institutionally to the extirpation of the causes that degrade man in his own eyes. What is the motivation of the churches as such? What is the official motivation of the select number of their members to whom is committed the spiritual oversight of the flock? What does the word "ecclesiasticism" mean? When is a church successful, or healthily growing? In terms of motives operating from within the churches upon the causes of our disillusionment, what is the real meaning of church statistics? Compare what the churches do to able ministers who

preach the Rotarian type of idealism with what they do to equally able or more able ministers who preach unequivocally that we cannot serve both God and Mammon. Ask leaders of industry who hold that its principles are inviolable whether the churches are allies of the system or makers of trouble for it. The answer that you will receive is that, though individual ministers are breeders of discontent, the churches as a whole are an asset to the system. No; there is no regenerate church.

We now have the groundwork for an explanation of the decay of belief in depravity even among those who have regarded themselves as faithful to the traditions of the elders. The doctrine, taken by itself, unrelieved by a counterbalancing doctrine of regeneration through the intervention of a merciful God, is too dreadful, too accusing of the Creator, to be endured. Therefore, when the doctrine of regeneration fails to be convincing in practice, the conviction grows that men are not so bad, after all. Natural amiability becomes more impressive, more suggestive of the hand of God in the creation of man, and natural unamiability actually gets overlooked or slurred over! The preaching of repentance loses its bite, too. An odd swing of the pendulum, this. For, whereas the thunders of the law broke forth against the natural depravity of man, which he couldn't help, the bad conduct of naturally good men is not found particularly exciting!

Is it possible, then, that the churches are becoming a fellowship of natural amiability, and that, failing to regenerate the industrial system, they are being assimilated to it? This would involve topsy-turvydom with respect to ecclesiastical views of the motives of men, it is true. For it would mean, on the one hand,

accommodation to industrialism's assumptions regarding our innate selfishness and the conflicts by which it enforces itself, but, on the other hand, the giving up, or shoving into the background, of the one Christian doctrine, depravity, with which these assumptions at all harmonize. The practical outcome of this confused drifting would be either a sharing by the churches in the current disillusionment, or an evasion of it by fellowship in thinking about more pleasant things, and a fellowship in doing good things that do not bring the issue to the fore.

The anti-Christian movement in China bases itself to a considerable extent upon the proposition that the Christian churches of the Occident are in alliance, conscious or unconscious, with the industrialism that exploits weaker peoples and disrupts the world. What truth is there in this judgment? If we of the churches are acquiescing in the interpretation of human motives that is the spiritual essence of the present industrial order, then we cannot wholly escape the accusation, no matter how generally amiable and innocent-minded our piety is. And there is only one way to prove that we are not acquiescing, and that is to attack. We must attack either by making a demonstration of regeneration (industrialism's low estimate of motives being accepted), or by exposing the falsity of this low estimate, in either case calling for repentance and for a reversal of the main direction of our organized conduct.

A significant body of historical study is bringing to light an amazing array of evidence that Christianity has, in fact, adopted the ethical fundamentals of the industrial consciousness. The anti-spiritual presuppositions of an acquisitive system have actually been baptized into the name of Christ, and

taught as virtues. Even Catholicism, in spite of its reverence for tradition, shies at—more than shies, objurgates—social aspirations that reflect an early Christian attitude towards property and towards the organization of society. Moreover, the dominant Catholic conception of loyalty to the State obligates the laity to follow industrialism, whenever it so commands, onto the field of carnage. Rome has the grit to teach her children when to disobey the powers of this world, but she has not had the spiritual clarity to see that the kind of docility and contentedness that she inculcates plays into the hands of Mammon, the chief enemy of the Christ. Protestants often marvel at the adaptability that this ancient, stiffly authoritarian church has shown in its adjustments to the modern secular State and to popular government. What makes this adaptability possible is the restricted limits of the sphere within which Catholicism actually exercises authority. This sphere is not coextensive with the forces that make or mar personality, bestowing dignity or throwing contempt upon it. According to the decree of the Vatican Council, the Pope may speak with infallible authority upon any and all questions of both faith and morals; but he does not speak upon all of them. If he did speak, in specific and understandable terms, of the meaning of Jesus' teachings as applied to present spiritual conditions, the position of Catholicism in industrial society would be far less comfortable than it now is.

The historical studies just referred to maintain that Protestantism, particularly Puritanism, has to a significant extent assimilated its conception of both the sphere and the method of the spiritual life to the economic process. That is, instead of insisting that this process be brought up to the standards implied

in the teachings of Jesus, Protestantism has *first*, acquiesced in the doctrine that the economic order somehow secretes from within itself its own rules, standards of value, and grounds of self-justification; *second*, assumed that what the economic system counts as virtues really are virtues, and that here the spiritual life gets its discipline, and character its solidity; *finally*, persuaded itself that the function of the anti-Mammon teachings of Jesus is to prevent excesses such as sacrificing integrity to cupidity, taking undue advantage of the weak, pride of wealth, forgetting the poor, and losing the sense of dependence upon God. Nay, prosperity in the sense of mere accumulation (not in the sense of wants of personality actually met) becomes a sign of God's kindness or even approval.

Hence austere industriousness (without regard to one's place in the economic scale) has been valued above play; above the enjoyment of nature, literature, or the fine arts; above even the joys of human fellowship. The habit of saving so as to accumulate a surplus has been almost identified with strength of character. A serious life has been evidenced by intense devotion to business, and winning a competence by working the system hard has been one of the surest guarantees of general respect even within the religious circle. As to the relation of God to the system, consider the tone and contents of Thanksgiving Day proclamations and of prayers and sermons upon this festival day. For what do people give thanks? And does it not appear that God himself is contented with the system?

In short, here are clear tendencies towards making Christianity into a bourgeois religion—the sanctification of the struggles of the middle class within

a *given* industrial order. Such a religion has difficulty in understanding either the discontent of the laborer, or the necessarily disintegrating effect of private wealth upon personality (yes, the necessarily disintegrating effect, as Jesus unqualifiedly declared), or the spiritual significance of freedom in thinking and in the development of ethical principles.

This is not intended to be a statement of the whole situation in Protestantism, but of a drift within it. If a debit and credit judgment were in order, one would have to study carefully the upspringing within both Protestantism and Catholicism (and Judaism, too) of a social movement that to some extent opposes this drift. But our concern here is simply to discover the relation between Christianity and the disillusionment with respect to himself that is creeping upon twentieth-century man. This is what we find: Both Catholicism and Protestantism are entangled with industrialism, both its practice and its philosophy—entangled, that is to say, with the force that has most to do with lowering us in our own eyes. Christianity in the western world is therefore in a dilemma of the most vital kind. If it affirms the greatness and nobility of the human person (whether innate or achievable by a special infusion of divine grace), it must demand fundamental reconstruction of the industrial order because in theory this order denies and in practice it thwarts every such affirmation. On the other hand, if Christianity continues to compromise as it is now doing, it cannot maintain even such spiritual values as it now hugs to its breast. Its faith in God will decline—it is now declining—with its inability to see or produce the Christlike in the common man engaged in the common occupations of the day. Its continuity with Jesus will grow

thinner and thinner because of growing inability to speak or understand the plainest of his language. The Protestant churches will more and more become clubs for the enjoyment of conventional and uncreative idealisms, and the Catholic church will protect itself from the advancing spiritual disintegration of Western society by immuring the sacramental life more and more in places of worship and in the esthetic appeal of symbolism. In both Protestantism and Catholicism, mystical experiences will have the character of a flight from life instead of being "the practice of the presence of God" not only in our kitchens but also in our factories, our department stores, and our offices of finance. Such a mystical flight has begun, in fact, not guessing its actual route, innocent of the possibility that it may even be another instrument whereby Mammon conceals the fact that it is—just Mammon.

PART II

THIS DISILLUSIONMENT IS ITSELF ILLUSORY

IX

THE PRECISE NATURE OF THE ISSUE

The disillusionment that creeps over twentieth-century man concerns, not the ability of the universe to supply what he desires, but his own capacity for really desiring anything greatly significant. Are our springs of action, then, all necessarily narrow, selfish, or sensual, and do we merely delude ourselves when we fancy that our souls have wings?

It is conceivable that we have wings, but that the surrounding atmosphere is not of sufficient density to sustain us in flight. In this case an old form of pessimism would be justifiable. We should be able to respect ourselves, but we should complain against the nature that brought us forth and now envelops us. The situation would have all the elements of the deepest tragedy—two irreconcilables meeting, and producing unrelievable woe thereby.

The general trend of our day is not towards pessimism of this kind. Modern man assumes, on the whole, that the world is large enough for our nature, and that his job is to get out of it what's there. No slackening of enterprise confronts us, little world-weariness; rather unprecedented eagerness to explore, master, and appropriate. Nature does not scare and oppress us as she used to do, and she is immensely more responsive to our desires since the sciences taught us how to predict. Accordingly, not disappointed bitterness, not renunciation nor resignation,

but exploitation is the characteristic attitude. "The world is my oyster."

What directly affects our idealism, then, is not any general lack of exuberance in nature, but the conviction that there is a special lack at one point. What we want is there, it is believed, but our wants, our springs of action, are scant. It is assumed that we cannot want the common welfare as much as we want profits; that we cannot desire world-fellowship as much as we desire the perquisites of our present war-making system of economy; that sex-appetite never can be made to play a harmonious part in a symphony of life; and that aspiration for communion with the divine is a refined and self-deceived form of the very forces that religion fancies that it is bringing under control.

Our question concerns the truth of this view. Is it borne out by the facts? If it is not borne out by the facts, then another question will confront us. To conclude that we are capable of high motives is not to affirm that we live up to our capacities. He who is most ardently respectful towards human nature will not deny that we live below them. How, then, does this come about?

An old answer is that we are fundamentally at variance with ourselves. On one side of our nature, it was said, we are divine or at least have a spark of divinity, but on another side we are of the earth, earthy. Others affirm that to be conscious is to desire, and that desire, in and of itself, is a state of division and inherently painful, and that relief can be had only through the extinction of consciousness. Upon this supposed disunity with self another sort of pessimism has been built. However high some of our motivation may be, and whatever the rest of the uni-

verse is like, it is said, we are doomed to defeat through self-frustration.

Even if we found deep grounds for self-respect, therefore, the spirit of disillusionment with reference to ourselves might not be wholly exorcized. In the present Part evidence will be given that neither the generalizations of science nor the run of everyday experience can justify the mood that has overflowed us. But this will have the effect of plunging us into an even more difficult problem—that of understanding the contrarieties within our nature. This will be the theme of Part III, and in Part IV the question will become, how to manage these contrarieties.

As far as the case permits, this line of inquiry postpones the problems usually called metaphysical. But they will hover near our every step, and the conclusions that we reach will necessarily have a metaphysical squint. If we can respect ourselves after looking one another squarely in the face, then score one for the universe that brought us forth! It is not altogether shabby. This we could maintain even if what is found worthy of respect should be in unresolvable conflict with some negative principle either within or without. For then the world-system would bring forth tragedy, which is the opposite of littleness and meanness. Tragedy is possible only in a world that contains inherent greatness. Even if some ultimate defeat awaits us, who knows what dignity man might attain by some superior method of meeting his fate?

But if, as I hope to show in the concluding division, there are ways in which we can utilize even the contrarieties of our nature—if we can win victories even through our defeats—then this, too, will suggest something concerning our world-system. An ex-

perience like this is an experience of freedom—an *experience* of freedom, not proof except in the sense that "the proof of the pudding is in the eating." Such experience would, however, become a datum for any metaphysics that fully takes in man. But all this belongs in the final section of the book.

X

"HUMAN NATURE BEING WHAT IT IS"

Two lines of thought are discernible in the minds of those who judge that human motivation is and must remain of low quality, namely, generalizations from direct observation of the life about us, and inferences from the truth that we are a part of nature and a manifestation of her unchanging laws. Both these grounds must be considered. I shall show, in the present section, what is implied as to motivation in our being enmeshed in the totality of animate nature; in the following section attention will be given to the bearing of current psychology upon our problem, and afterwards, I shall endeavor to pluck some of the fruits of direct observation.

For more than half a century, now, naturalistic views of man have had their center in the theory of evolution. We have come to know ourselves as blood relatives of the species that we call lower, and "blood relative" has come to mean not only bodily but also mental kinship. This, of itself, would scarcely argue anything as to the level of our capacities as compared with the level of the beasts, for various levels of conduct and apparently of capacity exist within our own species. It is not the fact of kinship, but the fact of law and continuity within this kinship that seems to furnish a basis for moderating our self-respect. Law is interpreted as if we were fatalistically assigned our place, and continuity is interpreted in the

sense of sameness with that from which we have sprung. Hence the notion that, "human nature being what it is" by virtue of our place in the evolutionary order, our motives are only complex forms of the impulses that we find in the lower animals.

Yet the story of development is a story of variation, of variation piled upon variation, and of sudden mutations. The continuity that pervades the whole is continuity of process, not the perpetuation of sameness. The connectedness of nature's forms is like the connectedness of a merchant's goods—all were acquired by purchase, all will be disposed of by sale; all appear in the same inventory and upon the same ledger; they have all this in common, and there is this continuity from one piece of merchandise to another. But this says nothing as to the range of differences. It was said of one of the great London "stores" some years ago that it would accept orders for any kind of commodity known to man.

By means of natural law we can pass from any event in nature to any other event, just as by the merchant's books he can pass—say—from a necktie to a delivery truck. But, just as unprecedented kinds of goods may be bought and sold without interrupting the system, so unprecedented natural events may occur, and unprecedented forms of life may appear, without any breach of continuity. Evolution is, indeed, not repetition of the same, but the bringing forth of that which is not the same. Expectancy is the atmosphere appropriate to it. Not that progress is implicit in evolution as such, but rather plasticity, roominess, and versatility. The fact that usually the development of new organs and new species takes place through the gradual accumulation of slight changes does not alter the logic of the situation;

gradualness of change does not mean sameness. Even if it did, the fact of mutations would still confront us.

As we have bodily organs that once were non-existent anywhere in our world-system, so we perform functions that are special to us. Instances will be given in a moment; but before going on to them, it is worth remarking that the argument from kinship to sameness works just as well backward as forward. If it be maintained that the blood relationship between an Abraham Lincoln and a coyote implies that the impulsions of the two are the same, it then becomes just as legitimate—and illegitimate—to interpret the coyote by Lincoln as the reverse.

Let us now examine a case or two of our immersion within the totality of animate nature. The statement has been made that the whole of human conduct turns upon two fundamental drives, the appetite for food and the appetite for sex. The reasoning by which this broad generalization is supported starts with the assumption that survival is the all-inclusive objective of organic impulses. Survival means, however, according to circumstances, either continuance of an individual life, or maintenance of a species. Nutrition, it is said, is the basic condition of individual survival; reproduction, that of species survival. Hence the conclusion is drawn that human life is ruled by just two drives, each proliferating into many details, the drive for food and the drive for sex-intercourse.

The theory has the attractiveness of simplicity, at least apparent simplicity; but it is the simplicity of abstractions substituted for the complexity of concrete facts. First of all, "survival," "individual," and "species" are our after-thoughts, products of our reflection and systematization. They are not a de-

scription of the facts of animal conduct or of human conduct. We can perceive that a given act is related to survival, but this by no means proves that survival was in any sense an objective of the act.

In the second place, the two-drive theory is not fundamental in its own sense of the term "fundamental drive." For, since sexual reproduction is known to have been preceded by a-sexual, and since a-sexual reproduction roots in cell-division as a phase of nutrition, the conclusion, upon the assumed basis, should be that there is only one basic drive, the nutritional!

In the third place, the theory confuses instead of clarifying human conduct in the sphere of sex and reproduction. Desire for sex-relations is not by any means the same as desire for offspring or for the maintenance of our species. Our race had been on the scene a long time before anybody suspected the causal relation between the sex function and the birth of babies. Desire for children does not root in sex appetite; it arises only after being with children. Desire for the maintenance of our species arises, of course, only through reflection, and its object is apprehended only through imagination. As a matter of unadorned fact, does not the sex-impulsion in human beings struggle to free itself from all necessary association with reproduction?

A fourth consideration concerns the other supposedly basic and inclusive drive, the nutritional. If we take the impulse to eat in its primary and simple sense, then we must see that a plentiful supply of food at any moment produces quiescence of food-getting activities; a full belly is, so to say, the *summum bonum* of this branch of motivation. But the theory goes on to classify with food-getting a

whole lot of other activities of getting, storing, guarding, and competing—almost the whole economic system, indeed. In subsequent chapters (15 and 16) we shall see how complicated, in fact, is the motivation of our system of production and distribution. At the present moment it is sufficient to point out how strained is the theory that all our individualistic getting is at bottom food-getting, and that all individualistic getting is directed towards the prolongation of the individual's existence.

Thus far our considerations are negative; but there are positive ones also. For it can be shown that within these two general areas unprecedented inclinations, or likes and dislikes, have repeatedly arrived. Sex-inclinations are the most easily-read instance. Since sexual reproduction was preceded by a-sexual, the sex-appetite in its totality had a beginning; it entered into a system in which it had been non-existent; it was an utterly new attraction. Moreover, it has undergone modifications and reversals. In some species promiscuity is attractive; in others sex-inclination spontaneously selects one permanent mate—among the pigeons, for example. In the case of man, so many differentiations, and such profound ones, have taken place that we are put to it to make our terminology consistent. Shall we classify the satisfaction that personal beauty in the opposite sex gives us as sexual, esthetic, or both? Certainly there was a stage in evolution at which appreciation of beauty had nothing whatever to do with sex. And what shall we say of mental graces—of wit, humor, originality, sincerity, good taste? These attract men toward women and women toward men; somehow these primarily non-sexual mental graces become a sex bond. It is clear, then, that this drive is no single, unchang-

ing thing; it is the scene and area of spontaneous, new, unprecedented inclinations; its first, raw stages, which chiefly attract biological interest, taken by themselves, misrepresent the truth as much as they represent it. Would it be old-fashioned, or rather merely "getting up to date," to add that fellowship between two personal spirits, recognizing and prizing and cultivating themselves as such, and therefore placing the primary sex-relation upon a basis of mutual respect and reverence—that such fellowship must be recognized and appreciated if one is to understand the sex drive as a human desire and motive?

A similar creativeness in the realm of drives has appeared somewhere in the world in relation to every type of human desire. The interests of men do not move in any straight line; they dart and quiver; explore, discover, make new habitations, and then migrate from the homes that they have builded for themselves. There was a time, for example, when our ancestors had no taste, no drive, for artistic creation. But at last there arose—we need not stop to say by what stages—a satisfaction that was not entirely dependent upon utility or consumption. Objects began to be made for the pleasure that the mere sight of them gave. Here is the evolution of a new species of motivation. We might almost say "species" in the biological sense, for art-interests breed freely among themselves but tend to become infertile when they are crossed with other interests.

The existence of the sciences, of which the doctrine of evolution is a conspicuous part, may itself be taken as an example of the emergence of a new motive. For here bursts forth a self-sustaining impulsion to intellectual activity that is free from fear, free from authority, and free from utilitarian considerations.

Here intelligence not only rises above the clod, not only disengages its interests from all the conditions of biological survival, but also reverses itself. For science is a mighty damming back of the historical momentum of mind, and the creation of new channels for its flow. Indeed, the emergence of individual and social self-criticism, whether in the scientific or the ethical sphere, would of itself be sufficient to prove that we belong to an order in which superior motivation can evolve out of inferior.

Said a youthful and inexperienced fish to an old and experienced one in the long, long ago before there were any land animals, "What fun it is to leap into the air! I wonder what it would be like to live on the land and only occasionally take a bath in water, just as we live in the water and only occasionally take a bath in air." "Nonsense!" replied the old and experienced fish. "Nobody could enjoy living in the air. How would one breathe? Your gills would dry up, and you would suffocate. The idea is contrary to nature and perfectly preposterous!"

XI

SOME NOTES ON THE PSYCHOLOGY OF MOTIVATION

Various phases of current psychology and would-be psychology—methods, points of view, particular facts—have given an apparent color of scientific justification, as we have seen, to the popular estimate of our motivation. We have done them full justice as part causes of the tendency to disillusionment, but we have not yet asked how far they logically justify it. This is the question that we now have to consider.

The attribution to psychology of magisterial authority in the realm of the interests of life is a bit of popular superstition. Probably something of the thrill evoked by the thought of unseen ghostly forces is in it; certainly it contains an over-wrought estimate of the psychologist, as though he had something of the medicine-man in him. Psychologists themselves know better, of course. Anyone who has observed the development of the science since, say, James published his two massive and fascinating volumes knows that cross-currents and choppy seas and changeable winds prevail in this quarter. The enormous expenditure of labor and of resources is, indeed, justified by the results, partly because a substantial body of detailed facts has been ascertained, and partly because basic issues as to subject-matter, method, and interpretation have been brought to the fore. But these issues have not been settled to the satisfaction of psychologists themselves, who are divided into several

apparently irreconcilable groups. And it is these basic issues that are chiefly important when we seek light upon our life-policies.

The problem of human motivation, for example—the ascertainment of both our actual motives and our capacities for motives—is not a matter of simple detail, like color-blindness or the curve of learning in typewriting. Rather, it seems as though we can scarcely touch the edges of motivation without plunging at once into the difficulties that are systemic to the science as a whole. First and foremost is the difficulty involved in the atomistic conception of analysis, a conception taken over from the physical sciences before they had reached their present insight into the all-embracing sweep of dynamic problems. It was taken for granted that to analyse mental life is to look for simple mental elements that correspond to material corpuscles characterized by what Whitehead calls "simple location." Then it was assumed—simply assumed—that mind is an aggregate of simple elements and that mental dynamic (very little attended to until recently) corresponds to this supposed aggregate of quasi-independent elements. That is, the main tradition of scientific psychology runs to the effect that our whole behavior is actuated by particular relations of a mechanical sort between elements (psychical or psycho-physical) that are as remote from experience as atoms.

This amounted, practically, to making a concept of method—a type of analysis—guarantee a particular metaphysics. The incontinence of the thing has been repeatedly pointed out from the early days of the present psychological movement. First, all the logical objections to English associationism applied here. Next, eminent psychologists of the new type—

Ladd, Münsterberg and (in a sense) James—warned us that simple sensations or other mental elements are not existing things, but only mental constructs of the psychologists, a kind of technical language, like equations or statistical curves. Finally, the physical prototypes from which the psychological assumption took its start, such as corpuscular indivisible atoms, have now been resolved by physics into systems of a dynamic sort. Whitehead maintains that the whole physical conception of elements and aggregates must now be replaced by that of organism—the parts are not before the whole, and the real wholes or organisms are dynamic, not corpuscular.

Meantime, there have been specific happenings in psychology that bear upon our quest. The chief recognition of the dynamic problem came through the theory of instincts. At first there appeared a tendency to attribute every main division of conduct to an instinct. Thus, the fact of reproduction was referred to an instinct of reproduction; moral conduct to a moral instinct; religion to a religious instinct; esthetic interests to an esthetic instinct, etc. This was, of course, a crude popular starting point, and the particulars had to be refined, but psychology did little more with mental dynamics for a long time than just reorganize or refine some old list of instincts. The number increased and the generality decreased. Instead of a social instinct, we have, it is held, a whole group of instincts that care for particular phases of our associated life—a gregarious instinct, a motherly or parental instinct, an instinct for dominance, and for submission, for example. But there never was any approximation to an accepted list, nor does there appear to be any sure way to determine the matter.

The instincts, whatever they are, have been taken, as a rule, as so many drives or impulsions not only rooted in our nature but also destined to express themselves willy-nilly; and the totality of instincts has been accepted as constituting the total drive of a man. But, over and above the fact that the list of instincts is unstable, this theory of the human drive encounters numerous obstacles.

In the *first* place, some of the instincts apply only within situations that may or may not arise. Fear-reactions, under some circumstances, have the marks usually attributed to instinct, but it does not follow that we have any drive towards fear. Similarly, pugnacity appears when experience takes a certain form, as restraint or attack from another, but pugnacity in the sense of not being at peace with oneself unless one can fight somebody else appears to be non-existent.

In the *second* place, habit plays an enormous rôle in the entire matter. That is, the outfit of instincts, if there is such an outfit, does not determine the configuration of the drives in any individual. Here is the general truth that underlies the possibly doubtful theory of sublimation. Apparently instincts can atrophy; certainly what are called instincts can be either active or quiescent.

Third, "satisfiers and annoyers," as Thorndike calls them, are not identical with instincts in every case. There are conditions in which it is annoying not to act, and other conditions in which it is annoying to act. Further, as he likewise maintains, there are "original tendencies of the original tendencies," as to repeat, to form habits, to organize; and, finally, there is the fact of self-criticism, with its impelling or restraining influence exercised from the stand-

point of the whole rather than of any specific instinct. More of this later.

Fourth, further study of our drives increases the certainty of their enormous plasticity. Woodworth has maintained that any mental mechanism can become a drive, that is, that we can develop a positive interest in and tendency to repeat anything that we ever do—we can "take an interest" in anything. Watson, too, from his point of view, and with his own conception of the method, holds that a man can acquire practically any qualities. "Condition" the few original reflexes in appropriate manner, and you will make of an individual a religious devotee, a monster of vice, or what you will. Finally, the whole notion that we possess an equipment of just such and so many instincts is threatened, not only from the Watsonian angle but also from several others. Instincts, various writers point out, appear to be classificatory devices and nothing more.

For our present purpose it is not essential to forecast the ultimate outcome of researches that bear upon these points. It is sufficient to recognize the great range of human motivation, the great plasticity of it (that is, the indefinitely many possibilities of character for the same individual), and the organic character of it (that is, the capacity for action from the standpoint of a desired whole). Anyone who is interested in the future development of thought upon this matter will do well to watch the discussions of the concept of "organism" (Whitehead's term) in the physical sciences and of "configuration" (an English translation of the German, *Gestalt*, as used by Koffka) or an equivalent in psychology.

The physics of today already has transcended the

notion that bodies are aggregates of elements—transcended it, not upon speculative or metaphysical grounds alone, but also upon the basis of experiment and mathematical analysis. Throughout nature, so Whitehead says, any concrete actuality is a dynamic whole, a complex event, not a corpuscle or an aggregate of corpuscles. These are merely abstractions, useful in their way, but matter is not even the residence of energy. Further, these dynamic wholes act spontaneously, and they even transform themselves from within themselves—they do not wait to be acted upon like billiard balls; rather, initiative is everywhere present.

If this conception of physical nature should become the accepted view, it would remove at a stroke the methodological foundation of much psychology that regards itself as particularly entitled to be called scientific. In particular, the whole of psychology would become dynamic psychology, and motivation would be recognized as *in limine* both organizing and self-transforming action. It is a safe guess that, in this case, *the self* would be accorded a far less grudging place than it has had in the psychology of the last generation. Professor Calkins has recently pointed out, in fact, that several contemporary movements of psychology are converging in this general direction.

It is an interesting coincidence that the concept of organism should emerge in physics and the concept of configuration in psychology almost simultaneously. As far as I am aware, there has been no connection or interdependence between them. It is even more interesting that both concepts should spring directly from experimentation. Much more experimental research must be made before we shall

definitely know just what truth there is in the *Gestalt*-psychology, and just how the concept of "configuration" applies, if it applies at all, at different levels of conduct. Prediction is precarious, and it is uncalled for; but again it lies upon the surface that here is a movement, experimental in method, that is destined, if it goes on, to instate the self as an actual determiner and organizer of behavior at the levels usually called social and ethical. And the self will not only not be conceived as an aggregate (even of forces); it will not be construed primarily by its antecedents of whatever sort. Adjustment, that is, will not be conceived as accommodation of a given organism to a given environment merely, but as also re-creation of both organism and environment. An entirely reasonable attitude might then be expressed as follows: "This is the sort of self, and this is the sort of society, that we want to be; let us, then, create educational, physiological, and economic conditions favorable thereto."

The position of psychoanalysis in the total movement of psychology is somewhat ambiguous, or at least not well worked out. On the one hand, we have here a genuine attempt at a dynamic psychology. The object under contemplation is not the brain; it is scarcely psycho-physical; it is predominantly, almost exclusively, mental, and the mental is conceived of not as a perceiving, knowledge-getting function, but as overwhelmingly desire—designing, scheme-forming, outward-pressing desire. Further, the individual is treated predominantly as an individual rather than as an aggregate. The disorders of personality are the main interest, and the treatment of these disorders is directed toward a reorganization of the personality so that it shall function as

a unit. On the other hand, the raw material of human nature appears to be much like a congeries of instincts, or a collection of wild animals each of which is ready to spring into action upon the slightest occasion. The endeavor to discover some central desire that uses these instincts for its own purposes is, indeed, a movement towards an organic view of the individual; but even the central desire, in the absence of help from the psychoanalyst, seems to have a substantially wild, instinctive quality.

"The Unconscious," or desire before psychoanalysis has enabled it to understand itself, may be either a literal description of mental dynamics, or a symbol that psychiatrists find useful in their practice, a symbol that abstracts from the psychical actuality much as atoms and ethers do from physical actuality. That psychoanalytic treatments have some success does not prove the truth of the practitioner's mental pictures. The Ptolemaic astronomy correctly predicted eclipses; the Mesmeric fluid, animal magnetism, the king's touch, spirits of deceased Indian chiefs—all have been effective for purposes of mental healing. Recently a psychoanalyst, MacCurdy, has pointed out that the patient's emotional reorganization and recovery may take place around a secondary or minor complex instead of the one that is the primary cause of the disturbance; the essential thing is to secure the proper attitude and procedure for reconstruction. The cure, then, does not prove that any theory of the contents or the processes of "the Unconscious" is correct.

There remains as evidence of the wild-animal-den view the fact that the patient himself accepts it as true in his own case. "Yes," he says, "I see that I have desired to commit incest with my mother, or

to murder my father. I didn't realize it until now." In other words, a psychoanalytic theory has been transferred to him in the course of the analysis. There is no evidence that he has become a psychologist, or that his ability at introspection has achieved a trustworthy stage. When witchcraft was believed, confessions were made, apparently sincere confessions, that one had "signed the Devil's book," or that one had done other monstrous deeds. Under questioning in court witnesses have recalled things that they never witnessed. A still closer parallel with psychoanalysis is the success of many a revivalist in convincing people of their utter moral worthlessness and helplessness, that they are creatures of the devil, moved solely by evil desires. In both cases the person who brings the relief is the one through whom the certainty of one's inner baseness first arises.

The upshot of the evidence, then, is about as follows: Psychoanalysis has extended in important ways our knowledge of the ramifications of the sex impulses and of the impulse to egoistic dominance; it has increased our knowledge of the motivation of much that mistakenly, through "rationalization," offers itself as reasonable conduct; it has put us upon our guard against a considerable range of self-deceptions; but it has not proved the actual existence of the diabolism that is pictured in "the Unconscious." And let it be remembered that, in front of the patient whose mind is supposed to be a den of wild beasts, sits the psychoanalyst himself, a self-controlled, benevolent, and high-minded man. Over against the theoretical Unconscious let us place the certainly actual honor of the psychiatrist in his handling of his patient—scrupulous honor in a situation that

brings to the fore the most enticing emotions and impulses.

A word should be said concerning the bearing of intelligence-tests upon our knowledge of the motives of men. There is a popular tendency, which is not altogether absent from academic circles, to jump at conclusions concerning motivation from the results of experiments upon something else. The adjectives "superior" and "inferior," applied primarily to levels of intelligence, come almost insensibly to be a designation of levels of manhood or of decency in general. Now, the most that can be said as yet concerning the interrelations between the various desirable and undesirable factors of personal make-up is that, on the whole, the more desirable tend to bunch together, and the undesirable likewise tend to go in bunches. It cannot be said, however, that there is only one worthwhile type, and that the core of this type is superior intelligence. We do not yet know just what this "intelligence" that we have been measuring is, nor what it guarantees at its various levels. It is certain that achievement depends upon other qualities also, so that failure may attend a high IQ, and success may be won by steady and persistent employment of an intelligence distinctly lower. Wisdom and goodness and efficiency have other foundations in addition to some as yet undetermined degree of intelligence. Further, it appears that within the general concept, "intelligence," we are required to distinguish between types. There is, for example, in addition to the abstract or conceptual type that is most cultivated in schools, a mechanical type of intelligence, very likely there is a social intelligence, and there may be others. We do not yet know, except in the vaguest way, how these varieties of intelligence

are dynamically related to the requirements of wise living, either individual or social.

Yet bold conclusions have been drawn on this very point. Without waiting for any research upon the possible connections between different intelligence-levels, on the one hand, and different sorts of drives on the other not a few persons have somehow assured themselves that superiority of intelligence tends and must tend to create a ruling class and that this ruling class will automatically run affairs in its own interest, making other classes means thereto. There is scarcely a shadow of evidence for this view. History seems to show that superior intelligence has aspired to all kinds of power and all kinds of excellence. Further, it is notorious that the resort to force, and even to less external means of putting halter and bridle upon one's fellows, is a second-class resource for those who lack strength to meet their fellows upon the basis of intelligent trust, good-will, and mutual sharing. Was it because William Penn lacked high intelligence that he treated the Indians in such an unconventional manner? The almost certain fact of a high average of intelligence among monarchs and high officials generally does not account for the specific principles upon which they administer government. For these principles run through the entire scale from Nero to Confucius, and from Louis XIV to Washington and Lincoln. If we were in position to measure the intelligence of rulers and heads of states through a considerable period of political history we might find—we probably should find—that the higher intelligence leans, on the whole, towards universal good according to the understanding of it that each period of culture makes possible; that it correlates with sensitiveness towards people, and

in this sense makes for appreciation of others' points of view and therefore for a common human measure of the good. Truly efficient love of one another may yet turn out to be the supremely satisfying accomplishment of the highest intelligence.

In the entire museum of misconstructions of intelligence-test results nothing, perhaps, is more grotesque than the inference, or assumption, that high intelligence will of course accept and profit by the motivation of industrialism in its present form. The average IQ of the financially successful is somewhat higher than that of the economically under-dog portion of the populace. In other words, the *degree* of success is due *in some measure* to this factor. In some measure only, for there is no evidence that all the more intelligent succeed and all the others fail; and the degree only, for in a general way intelligence connotes success in the pursuit of any end that it consents to serve, and moreover we know of particular circumstances that induce men to pursue wealth and the power that it brings. We know that the environmental influences of our time shunt men's ambitions in particular directions. We are trained from infancy by an economic order that takes for granted the service of self rather than of others. Some persons who possess high native intelligence go in for the ends that this training promotes, and of course such persons have more than average success in getting what they want. Meantime, other possessors of the gift go in for other things—research, original production in literature and the fine arts, humanitarian service, the championship of unpopular causes, the development of a co-operative society, the promotion of religion.

Moreover, we have no comparative measures of the

intelligence of different types of successful men of affairs. What should we find if we compared these three sorts: Men who rely upon compulsion; men who rely upon indirection or intrigue; and men who rely upon frankness, conciliation, and moderation? We do not know which of these would exhibit the highest intelligence; but it is allowable to guess!

The relation between the insight of the literary artist and that of the psychologist is sufficiently close to require a comment, finally, upon the evidential value of the literature of disillusion that was mentioned in Chapter V. Is it not the business of the imaginative writer, one may ask, to see life as it is; to be more sensitive than the common run of men to the devices and desires of the heart, and thus to reveal us to ourselves? Look in the mirror of current literature, then, and see what a rank thing your nature is! An appropriate part-reply to this would be: Why this mirror more than scores of others that literature, past and present, has held up to nature? What guarantee is there that this reflecting surface has fewer distorting curves than others that render a different image? Why accept at its own value, without analysis, the cynical "realism" of one group, or the "barbaric naturalism" of another? Their borrowings from the psychologists are mixed and partly dubious or worse, and the marks of the seer are scarcely discernible.

That some value as a revealer of ourselves to ourselves may reside in even a distorted image must be granted. The literature in question is uncovering naïve insincerities and evasions that infest our life, and it is almost compelling us to see that there are forces within and around us that require a rational control that never yet has been provided. Neverthe-

less, in this total phenomenon we are witnessing one of the literary fashions that have succeeded one another for thousands of years. These pictures have truth in them, but it is truth selected and isolated in accordance with a mood, a drift, a spirit of the times, and then imaginatively reorganized in the interest of composition or picture-making. The literature of tomorrow will turn to other phases of experience, other types of motivation, and it will leave a different taste in the mouth of readers and theater-goers.

It turns out, then, that the psychology of motivation, and the quasi-psychology of it, have drifted here and there into disillusioning allegations, but without definitely proving them. On the one hand we have the hang-over of an unworkable theory of instincts; a decadent atomistic point of view and method; behavioristic metaphysics based upon nothing more substantial than a preference as to what one shall attend to; hasty inferences from the results of intelligence-testing; the rough-and-ready symbols of practicing psychiatrists, and literary exploitation of the whole. On the other hand, we find failure of every theory that assimilates human motivation in its totality to either the movements of matter or the impulses of the lower animals, and instead, growth of contrary views within general science and specifically within psychology; in particular, a definite reaffirmation that the individual mind acts as a true integer, a genuine one-in-many.

This does not solve our whole problem; we still have much to learn about ourselves. But it furnishes at least a "not proved" to set against our temptation too easily to believe the loud voices of disillusionment. It furnishes, likewise, a visa for those who would travel outside of technical psychology in order

to see more of humanity. We should not be surprised if we find organization of drives by some sort of ruling drive; the consequent shifting of satisfactions and dissatisfactions, approvals and disapprovals; the possible approval or disapproval of the ruling drive, with consequent redirection of the central tendency. All this implies, likewise, readiness to question the extent and significance of the term "drive." Perhaps we are moved only in part by a *vis a tergo;* possibly man is a forward-reacher, an initiator, a creator. And perhaps this disillusionment that threatens or seems to threaten paralysis of our wants may turn out to be the vague, confused beginning of a new want, the darkness upon the face of the deep whence a new world is to appear.

Note. The authors and works referred to in this Chapter are as follows:

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XII

CHILDHOOD AS A REVEALER OF HUMAN CAPACITIES

The attitude of disillusionment puts the mind into a prison upon whose walls hang pictures of life at which the prisoner continually gazes. Make the round of your cell, O prisoner, and tell me what stages of life you find represented. There are no children in any of the pictures!

The apparent evidence that humanity is doomed to low types of motivation is drawn from a fraction of experience at particular stages of life. None is derived from childhood, scarcely any from adolescence; nearly all of it comes from the fully adult period which, being most conventionalized and least plastic, is least able to reveal to us our unrealized possibilities.

If we desire to witness our elemental propensities, or nearly all of them, in unrestrained swing, let us observe children. Not yet encrusted with custom, not yet halter-broken to the emotional restraints of their elders, they "let go" readily. What is inside shows outwardly. At least this is relatively true as compared with us who have endured the bit so long that we take it to be a part of our nature. And a great variety, indeed, there is inside a child; in an hour you shall witness a range of motivation that you might not discover in a grown-up in a score of years. Here is nature in the raw, or nearly so. What im-

pression, then, does childhood make upon us when we become intimate with it?

A mixed impression: Amusement at the simple, literal, and unashamed reproduction of our own foibles; something like astonishment at the (usually) easy transitions between desirable and undesirable conduct; a sort of fascination by the utter naturalness of generosity, alongside the equal naturalness of pinching self-regard; and (if we are analytic) a bit of self-searching when we realize the deep dependence of both upon conditioning circumstances as well as upon original tendencies. All this, but never disrespect—at least never after one has taken the trouble to trace the processes of children's minds. A really understanding intimacy with the young appears invariably to produce respect for them.

The drama of disillusionment is never played upon this stage. Cynicism, depression, revolt, and either surly, regretful, or ghoulish acquiescence in mean ways of living, all are shoved aside, forgotten, made impossible when we sympathetically enter into the experiences and attitudes of dawning life. Spirits bruised by adult experience find healing in play with children; calloused minds recover their sensitiveness by merely watching them. If a small child is perceived to be in immediate peril, the most hardened adult will suddenly exhibit a glint of nobility.

All this constitutes evidence with respect to the validity of the reasoning that is offered by the current disillusionment. Evidence, not merely incitement to change of mood; though such a change may itself be evidential in some conditions. Depression of spirit can disappear under the influence of children, or under the influence of alcohol. But the difference is twofold: Alcohol dulls the edge of judgment, and it

introduces us to no fresh facts, whereas acquaintance with children does not impair the judgment, and it does introduce us to pertinent facts. The fact that when original nature displays its rudiments with frankness and unrestraint we do not find confirmation for a certain view of life, but on the whole find ourselves drifting in the opposite direction, is distinctly evidential.

There is no need to be afraid that we shall yield too much to naïve impressions—at least no one who has lived through the child-study movement is likely to remain naïve. For a whole generation analytical study has consciously and of set purpose put aside the gush of parental impulse and the sentimentality of certain kindergarten traditions in a determination to be objective and to hitch up child-life with the scientific study of nature generally. Now, not only has the child-study movement not slurred over the unlovely traits of the young; it has actually picked out and emphasized every shred of evidence of irrationality, social insensitiveness, selfishness, cruelty, and whatever else might seem to reflect the drives of pre-human species.

At the outset of the child-study movement, genetic psychology enthusiastically believed that the human individual rather closely recapitulates the developmental stages of lower species, and that childhood is a genuine savagery. This was an unsentimental theory; at least it made of children creatures of instincts to which nobility could not be attributed. If science ever had an opportunity to lay the foundations of a pessimistic view of man, it was now; for its eyes were straining to see animality and irrationality wherever they could be found. Higher, more social and rational drives, it was held, appear spontane-

ously at adolescence, and they are consolidated in maturity. We now know that this was an exaggeration of the spontaneous values of adolescence. Suppose this exaggeration had been discovered at the time; the conditions then would have been ripe for explaining human motivation at its best as merely a set of complicated and sophisticated forms of drives that are both low and blind.

Thus, modern child-study has leaned over backward in its endeavor not to be complimentary in its interpretations of the young of the species. If an anthropoid ape should acquire ability to read English, he would not discover any race-prejudice against apes in the American publications that represented this point of view! But the point of view did not maintain itself. It rested upon three supports each of which proved to be weak. *First,* the embryological facts that formed the substructure turned out to be too few and too scattered to establish recapitulation even in pre-natal life. *Second,* the view of instinct that was employed was speculative, almost animistic. *Third,* observation of children was skewed by the theory under which it proceeded—the theory that children recapitulate savagery and barbarism. Disproportionate attention was given to conduct that is disagreeable to elders; socially neglected or mistrained youngsters were incautiously taken to be "the child"; everything obstreperous was a shining nugget. The movement actually reached the point of awakening apprehension as to the normality or sincerity of untroublesome children.

The decadence of this mode of approach, and the rise of more objective methods, have brought us insight that is of the utmost importance to anyone who desires to understand the motivation of adults. First

of all, psychical continuity rather than discontinuity between childhood and maturity has been proved to exist; in the second place, the remarkable plasticity or modifiability of childhood, taken in connection with this continuity, has given us clues hitherto lacking concerning the real origin of many adult traits.

Small children can respond to nearly if not quite every sort of stimulus that adults feel. We cannot longer regard even sex as a completely delayed drive, for traces of sex-stimulation are found in infancy, and definite sex interest follows very early. Any social impulse, good or bad, that adults exhibit can be found in early childhood also under appropriate conditions of stimulation. Moreover, in respect to the employment of intelligence there is no necessary break between childhood and maturity, for rational processes mingle with impulse and emotion from infancy. In fact, old-fashioned parental authority met scarcely any obstacle greater than the capacity of children to have a reason and to stick to it. We now know that scientific attitudes and types of observation and inference no more need to be postponed than does good pronunciation, which is taking the place of the old-fashioned "baby-talk." It is worth noting, by the way, that "baby-talk," wherever it exists, has been learned largely from adults!

This psychical continuity between childhood and maturity vacates the notion that adulthood is a ready-made set of drives or characteristics into which we are ushered by natural laws of growth. We are what we are, not because nature acts after the manner of destiny or fate, but because some selective process has been at work in each individual case. Each of us has the capacity to be very different from what he is. It is true, of course, that there are inborn

and ineradicable differences betwen individuals, differences in degree of energy, in degree of intellectual capacity, in degree of sensitiveness towards a given sort of stimulus, and therefore differences in emotional type. But these are entirely generic; they do not shut up an individual to just this or that occupation, social bond, way of thinking, or policy and habit of weighing values. If we desire to account for the particular qualities of an individual, we must look into his whole experience from infancy onward.

This point of view is now no longer a merely general probability. Psychiatrists and experts in child-guidance are daily tracing to particular experiences what seem at first sight to be native and ineradicable personal traits. Moreover, many a bound personality is being released by the interjection of new experiences and the formation of corresponding new habits. This is true of both children and adults, and it is particularly noteworthy that the release of adults often depends upon undoing a knot that was tied in childhood.

If the plasticity of childhood and the psychical continuity between maturity and immaturity are, in one aspect, portentous, they are likewise heartening. For the fine qualities that children are capable of—their spontaneity, their capacity for reversing themselves, their generosity and affection, their sense of humor, their unabashed candor, their frequently startling objectivity—we of adult years also are capable of. Childhood is not a shut-off room which we are permitted to visit now and then in order to forget the disagreeable apartment in which we are compelled to live; childhood is a part of what we still are! Plasticity, we are learning, though it may decline with the hardening of the arteries, has no

dead line. Experiment has disproved the view, held as late as William James, that after adolescence we are practically incapable of learning qualitatively new habits. We can both increase already used powers by further use of them, and also bring into action neglected powers.

Anyone who can enter sympathetically into the life of another has capacity for developing in himself the qualities of this other. The fact that our cynicism, our distrust of others, and our doubt of ourselves shrink when we make ourselves companions of the young is a direct evidence of what our nature contains, in however undeveloped form. And who does not grow mellow—who does not experience a measure of regeneration (becoming "as a little child")—upon witnessing in children such admirable graces as candor, responsiveness to affection, generosity, the habit of laughter—all spontaneous, unreserved, uncalculating? It is because there is something of the child within me that I am capable of entering the Kingdom of Heaven.

At first sight, psychoanalytic studies may seem to work against the view both that childhood is so plastic and that it is so beautiful. Certainly these studies are sobering. After making due deduction for speculation that expresses itself as statement of fact, and for an almost mythological symbolism that spreads a fog of fatalistic mysticism over simple and controllable facts, there is still excellent reason for growing sober. But the reason is the one already given for regarding as portentous our new knowledge of the possibilities that reside in early mind-sets. These possibilities are both portentous and heartening, we have said, and there is nothing in the ascertained facts of psychoanalysis that goes against this statement.

Sex-tangles can start in infancy, and they can persist into maturity, thwarting life at almost any point. Attitudes of dependence upon a parent may be so overwrought, or they may be continued so long, that again the mature person never quite comes to himself. But these are not fated tragedies; they are errors that can be prevented. Psychoanalysts are clear upon this point. There remains, then, no difficulty unless it be the shock that some persons experience upon hearing that small children are capable of sex response and that their sex attraction may be towards a parent. If such persons will only take notice that psychoanalysts employ the term "sex" in an exceedingly broad manner, sometimes making it as inclusive as the term "affection"; and if they will further reflect that there is nothing unclean in sex as such, so that a psychically sexless child would be no more "innocent" than one psychically sexed, the psychoanalytic view, even if it be wholly true, will be seen not to rob childhood of any spiritual beauty.

The remark was made, a little way back, that fellowship with children produces respect for their native qualities. Some evidence of the correctness or incorrectness of this statement ought to be discoverable in the attitudes of teachers and in the practices of schools. The teacher becomes acquainted with many children of different types; is less liable than a parent to be swayed by emotions that deflect the judgment; is in a situation that calls for professional study and attitudes in the matter. The trained teachers, then, and the schools that make the largest study of the problems of education may be expected to accumulate experience and views that have some significance. Now, it is safe to say that today no school

that is modern or even intelligently managed is conducted upon the assumption that children at any age are merely instinctive creatures. Moreover, in the schools in which experimentation is most free and pervasive, you will find an abounding belief in children, and no spirit of disillusionment with respect to adults. You will find criticism of adult society, great dissatisfaction with it, to be sure; but on what ground? On the ground that the traditional, conventional treatment of the young represses, retards, covers up, and thus defeats the splendid capacities that are within us.

It is noteworthy that the schools and schoolmen who make this charge do thereby place themselves under obligation to make a concrete showing of what can be done by better education. What happens when schooling is guided by this glowing faith in man? Does the faith grow brighter and brighter, or does it check itself by its own failure to work? It is my opinion that the actualities of human nature are receiving more illumination at the present moment in the experimental schools than anywhere else. Let us take a glance or two, then, in this direction.

XIII

CAPACITIES REVEALED BY NEW TYPES OF EDUCATION

The same two decades that showered us with mental tests witnessed also the upspringing of many schools that are variously designated by such terms as "modern," "experimental," and "creative activity." Creative activity, as a description of what pupils do when they are at school, is an arresting notion. It obviously assumes with respect to pupils' capacities something different from popular thought about them, and different, too, from the traditions of the schoolmaster. The school policy that it connotes includes provision for an unprecedented degree of both negative freedom (absence of compulsion) and positive freedom (abundance of materials with which to work and natural situations to be met by the pupils' own initiative). Observation of pupils placed in conditions thus favorable for the showing out of what is in them may be expected to throw light upon the motives and the capacities of human beings.

The testing movement has had the effect of stressing "nature" rather than "nurture" as the great determinant of conduct—over-stressing it, indeed. But the creative type of school-experience yields data that help towards a balanced understanding of the factors. In general, this experience tends to make both nature and nurture stand out; the old bipolarity of heredity-environment, nature-nurture,

remains, but both poles are illuminated. This type of school makes obvious the differences in native gifts, but it shows likewise that conditions created by adults have prevented us from knowing what gifts are there.

Whenever a given sort of conduct is oft-repeated, our first, incautious impulse is to guess that the conduct in question is produced by some specific quality or bent of one's original nature. The absence, or even the great infrequency of anything, is taken, similarly, as evidence that there is a vacant place in one's nature. Thus a bad mental habit, a fallacious mode of judging, gets control of us. "It's his nature," we say, not stopping to consider whether the whole of his capacity or only a fraction of it has been displayed. What the experimental schools are doing is to bring into action capacities that commonly are under-exercised and therefore not recognized as existing.

These schools are proving that there is more in human nature than we had dreamed of in our philosophy. The method of the proof is, in principle, simple: Make conditions favorable for the maximum voluntary exercise of any and all worth-while capacities that may possibly be there. When this is done, behold, pupils "take an interest in" many things that have been regarded as beyond their range. We are finding out that teaching of the traditional sorts has habitually aimed under the heads rather than over the heads of pupils. An intellectual springiness that teachers and parents failed to discover or produce by the methods of prescription, spontaneously appears under the new conditions. Conduct now occurs that is better by far than old-type schools ever thought of requiring or even recommending.

All this throws light upon the motives of men. In brief, this is the trend of the facts: *First*, a surprising degree of rationality has appeared. That is, children and youth are showing remarkable capacity for the apprehension of problems, the weighing of facts, the holding of judgment in suspense, caution in generalizing, readiness to revise one's own findings, and ability to resist suggestion and external authority. *Second*, equally surprising social capacities come to the surface. Pupils show not merely ability to run the machinery of a self-government scheme devised by teachers, but also readiness to feel situations and needs, to originate solutions, to carry responsibilities, to organize and cooperate, to appreciate both justice and generosity, and to make self-corrections. *Third*, to the originality that is involved in all this there is added amazing creativeness in literature, drawing, and painting.

If this were a discussion of educational method, we should now inquire, of course, into the specific procedures of the schools and the teachers that have these effects upon pupils. But the technic of teaching is not our present concern. What is directly to our purpose is the demonstration that schools and teachers of the older, customary sort did not bring out the whole nature of their pupils. Indeed, the schools of yesterday concealed, retarded, distorted, smothered some of the most valuable gifts, thereby unwittingly contributing to the forces that have produced the present sense of disillusionment with respect to human nature.

It is worthy of particular note that the "creative activity" schools are discovering capacities other than those usually classed as intellectual. It is much that the young take an interest in abstract and book-

ish knowledge; it is more that they take the attitudes and employ the processes of science with reference to natural events; but beyond this, and of greatest significance, is capacity to adjust human relations in thoughtful, high-minded, and sometimes original ways. Only a few years ago an incident like the following would have astonished any teacher, but today it seems only "natural." A group of children, engaged in play-activities that involved construction-work, discovering that merely impulsive conduct interfered with their purposes, called a meeting, devised a government, and actually administered it effectively. Not the least instructive feature of this incident is that these children, when their own information did not suffice, voluntarily sought help from a teacher.

Such fresh and keen practicality in attacking the problems of social living in the school is often extended into the problems of the larger community also. Instances are multiplying in which community service of great value has been done by the young upon their own initiative (with the constant help of teachers, of course). Not only have children shown eager willingness to relieve immediate distress; they have penetrated to the causes of one or more common infectious diseases. and have mastered some of the methods of prevention; they have worked intelligently and devotedly at the problem of parks and playgrounds; they have cooperated with police departments and fire departments. And in and through the whole there are glints of creativeness. Genuine creativeness, not merely naïveté that happens now and then to make a happy hit.

The creativeness of the young adds to our knowledge of ourselves a touch more thrilling than that of

romance, and it suggests fascinating outlooks for the future. The ruts that exist almost everywhere in our conduct have heretofore constituted the staple evidence concerning the nature of man. More than once already we have noticed how prone men are to take habitual performance as a measure of possible performance. Conventionality, it seems, always claims that it is more than conventionality; it makes itself out to be a forthright utterance of original, unchangeable human nature, or even a requirement of ethical obligation and the will of God. What a happy reversal of all this might occur if schools generally should cultivate in their pupils the ability to get out of ruts as well as to get into them. It is conceivable that society might ultimately include in its regular expectations a genuinely original, self-transcending, non-conformity and re-creation.

The most astounding piece of educational literature that has appeared in many a day is Mearns's *Creative Youth* (New York, 1925). It is an account of the teaching of literature to pupils of high-school age through the unified experience of appreciation and creation. Yes, creation of literature, not 'exercises in composition.' The evidence is here in a collection of real poems thus produced. The inventiveness displayed in them is almost unbelievable; the insight into life shown by several of the young poets is a mystery that calls for solution; but the poems are undeniably poems, undeniably original, some of them worthy (literary critics being judges) to stand alongside the best that the recognized poets of our day have produced.

What is the explanation of this wonder? Mr. Mearns answers that he merely made conditions favorable for full self-expression. There was free appre-

ciation, favorable or unfavorable, of the literature of past and present, no one's honest judgment being rebuked or authoritatively overridden. There was a cooperative spirit that enabled the pupils to profit from the judgments that they passed upon one another's productions—criticism did not quench the flame. There was help from the teacher in the way of information about literary technic, and in the way of encouragement to self-respect and self-confidence as well as self-judgment. Individuality, rather than conformity of any kind, received constant applause. This class had its setting in a school that favors just these things. All this Mr. Mearns makes evident, but he insists that these conditions and methods merely clear the way for a creative urge that is present, he is sure, in children and youth generally. He finds that small children make attempts at original creation, but hide the product away, and fail to develop the self-confidence and the practice that alone can bring their original powers to fruitage. The point of all this is the naturalness of free creation of beauty. Man is by nature a creator of beauty!

Parallel with Mearns's book may be placed, as further and possibly equal evidence of creative capacity in the young, the April-May-June, 1926 issue of *Progressive Education* (Washington, D. C.). It contains many reproductions, mostly in colors, of original pictures made by children. In these child-productions there is vastly more than imitation. One's breath is taken away again and again, indeed, by the seizure and vivid presentation of what is characteristic in a scene or in a person; or, one is thrilled by the child-artist's subtle realization of just where lies the beauty of the object represented. As a con-

sequence we have here something beyond mere representation, something more significant than technic learned from a teacher. We find here insight (the product of originality in observation), and self-expression that, being neither conventional nor merely generic but individual, is truly creative.[1]

These poems and pictures are, of course, not the average productions of their young authors, and the young authors themselves probably have native talent considerably above the average. We must not make haste to infer that children in general might reach this precise level of performance. Nevertheless, we must not dismiss these unusual productions by merely muttering "IQ." They are not to be thought of as the work of children who are freaks, or (in the biological sense) sports. This is school work, produced in the ordinary routine of the day. Schools always have had in them pupils whose intelligence-quotient was high, but somehow the schools of yesterday had no such product to show.

It is clear, then, that generation after generation can come and go without discovering its own children. Without discovering, not only what its ablest are capable of, but the others also. For it is altogether probable—the newer sorts of school are accumulating evidence all the time—that conditions that raise the performance of gifted children raise the performance, also, of the rank and file.

This ray of light, shining out of a few new-type schools, illuminates to some extent the whole problem of adult society, both its capacities and the way to bring them to fruition. There is no reason in the

[1] For parallel evidence of musical creativeness in children see the July-August-September 1926, issue of the same magazine, PROGRESSIVE EDUCATION.

nature of things or in the nature of man why the creativeness that is fostered in schools should not be fostered also in the larger society. We need only make general the conditions that teachers are creating in schools. This would involve the reversal of a habit that custom transmits from age to age—a habit that I shall make bold to call the psychical inbreeding of adults. By this I mean that it is traditional for adults to segregate themselves as a supposedly self-sufficient portion of society and to draw their standards, their expectations, and their stimuli from among themselves. Through this inbreeding it comes to pass that each generation of grown-ups becomes the spiritual successor of the preceding generation of grown-ups, whereas it should be the spiritual successor and heir of its own childhood.

Perhaps the younger portion of society will yet release us from our disillusionment.

XIV

SMALLNESS IN GREAT MEN AND GREATNESS IN SMALL MEN

If your peace of mind depends upon your being able to bestow unmixed admiration upon the great men and the great deeds of our national or racial past, think twice before you read the present dominant types of history, biography, and character-delineation. For they are subjecting halos to spectrum-analysis! The result is that we are compelled, time after time, to qualify the approvals that are traditional with us, and to tone down our reverence. How "human," after all, were these men and these deeds that we had supposed to be so far removed from mere us. How naïve or even gullible were many of our old attachments. We are tempted to become cynical and to feel ourselves disillusioned.

But it is possible, where feelings are so actively involved, to jump from the frying pan into the fire, exchanging an illusion of nothing but greatness in our heroes for an illusion of nothing but meanness. What the critical methods are showing is that motives are mixed in both the greatly good and the greatly bad, as well as in us who are neither the one nor the other. And the obverse of the discovery of smallness in great men is the clearer and clearer demonstration of greatness in small men. That is, the more objective and merciless our analysis of men is, the more do particular qualities stand out in their

own light, and the more sharp become the contrasts. The lesson of the new biography is not, "All men are alike," but "Look for the particulars."

Until a few years ago, when researches began to be made into the psychology of "transfer of training," we lacked means for understanding the coexistence of opposite qualities in the same personality. Worldly-wise observers knew that motives are mixed, but how they came to be mixed, how ethical contradictories can endure the presence of each other, and why the good influence of home, school, and church have such equivocal results—all this was a matter of guess-work.

Some of this guess-work, taking the form of theology, accounted for our contradictory selves by the theory that God and the devil, or the Divine Spirit and human depravity, are at war in each of us. But this did not explain the complacency with which a man can be good and bad, great and small, at the same time. The easy way for thought was to place each man in some broad category and then either ignore conduct that did not fall into it, or else find excuses or sophistical explanations. A man was either a Christian or a non-Christian *as a whole*, it was assumed. If he was a Christian, his un-Christlike conduct was assigned to a dim region of thought and then often conveniently forgotten; if he was a non-Christian, his Christlike conduct was the part assigned to this limbo and then forgotten.

Corresponding to this theology there was a naturalistic interpretation of man that ran to the effect that human nature is essentially low, or at least selfish and tricky, and that our virtues are either refined and far-seeing selfishness, or else a mere cloak of respectability. The dim region of thought in this

instance, as in the theological judgment upon non-Christians, was that in which moral purity, strength, or greatness seemed spontaneously to spring from within the man.

Into this thought-situation came experimental psychology, taking to pieces these complex mental facts instead of interpreting them by broad concepts that are more or less speculative. Why, it asked, are the spelling papers of a given school pupil scrupulously neat, but his arithmetic-papers slovenly? The same pupil is actually both neat and not neat! How is it that a child humanely reared so that in his maturity he is sensitive to the pleasures and pains of his kin, his neighbors, and even the lower animals, exhibits also insensitiveness to the weal and woe of his competitors or his employes? The same man is kindly, yet cruel! How can one who has been trained to strict honesty of thought by mathematical study be evasive and untrustworthy? Nay, how is it that one can sincerely believe obviously contradictory doctrines, as that God is infinitely benevolent as well as infinitely wise and powerful, and yet sends into eternal torment persons whom He himself has created and sustained in existence up to the moment of their doom?

The upshot of research into this problem is—some technicalities omitted—the proof that training or experience can have a wider or narrower "spread" according to the components or the method of it. Training to neatness can be narrowly directed to spelling papers, or it can be so handled that some effect upon arithmetic papers also will appear. There is no general trait of neatness; there are, rather, neatnesses, though these may be brought into the unity of a common ideal and habit. Similarly, there

is no general quality of kindliness or cruelty that presides over all one's human relations. The man whom we index as humane can be hard as flint; the one whom we have set down as unfeeling can perform acts of delicate or heroic kindness. So with honesty. Pupils who habitually cheat in one subject resist temptation to cheat in other subjects or in games. What wonder, then, that sincere belief in obvious contradictories occurs? As there is no general trait of honesty, so there is no "faculty" of reason that spreads itself equally through all our intellectual activities. But more or less generalization does occur in both thought and conduct, and whether it shall be more or whether it shall be less is partly in our keeping. We can train ourselves to participate in broad issues and ideals, we can form a habit of noticing the elements in new situations so that we see what principle applies, and we can discipline ourselves into paying the price of an organized personality.

We have no reason, then, to suppose that a man who is great in one respect will be great or good in all respects, nor, conversely, to suppose that a man who is small in several ways will be small in all his ways. There is as yet no really all 'round education or all 'round experience; we do not yet know how much can be done by schools or homes to provide such education or experience.

This little excursion into the borders of psychology should enable us to render fair judgment upon current types of disillusioning biography. To the extent that a biographer burrows into weaknesses under the assumption that the worst in a man is the real clue to him—to this extent the supposedly enlightened writer reproduces the wholesale naturalism that endeavored to offset the equally wholesale the-

ology. Such biography is pre-psychological. On the other hand, why should we object to the publication of any well-authenticated fact concerning any public character? We have every reason to expect that minute scrutiny will reveal some sort of smallness in any great man. What we should beware of is the obscuring of what is admirable by the dust that goes into the air when these smallnesses are dug out.

That hero-worship has had a setback is not a matter for regret, but rather for congratulation. For not only was it careless of historical truth, but it separated from us those who are of us, making us feel unduly inferior to good men, and (as the psychoanalyst would say with some show of reason) making a false compensation for our own defects by adulation of men who were supposed not to have them.

There are other reasons, too, for rejoicing at the growth of realistic methods in the appraisals of men. For it is not merely historical distance that creates illusion, but social distance also, and likewise interests that are served by making distances appear where they do not exist. Let me speak without reserve. The achievement of success in any commonly accepted sense of "success" ordinarily produces self-gratulation of an expansive sort. That is, one attributes to oneself admirable qualities other than those that produced the success. Jack Horner said "What a big boy am I!" Moreover, the successful man's neighbors, too, admire the whole man instead of merely the particular acts and qualities that bring him into notice. Thus it is that practically any successful man is overestimated by both himself and his contemporaries.

In the same way, distinctions of birth, wealth, and

official position automatically inflate themselves. Even in societies that count themselves democratic there is an astonishing amount of kow-towing to station. Yesterday Mr. X was nothing but a politician, a leader of a party or of a section of a party. His own maneuvers and those of his friends having secured for him nomination for a high office, he began now to be more remote from the common. Rumors that a great and wise man had been discovered blew over the land with every breeze. But even this campaign puffiness was a slight thing in comparison with the size that the man seemed to take on after he was seated in a chair of state. There was now not only deference to his office, but also breathless watching for his every next word or move, as though he were the arbiter of destiny; and this—let it be noted—was not chiefly fear of his power; it was belief in his true greatness, wisdom, and goodness. Though no act of outstanding ability or courage could be credited to him; though he had neither eloquence, nor wit, nor marked idiosyncrasy; though he lacked even the picturesqueness of the adventurer; yet was he, for the time being, taken to be one of the great characters of history. Two factors, of course, worked together to create this impression: On the one hand, politico-economic propaganda, which found it more useful to exalt a leader than to argue a policy; and on the other hand, on the part of the populace, inherited assumptions that there is a great distance between the ruler and the ruled, and that the greatness of one's country somehow passes over to the leaders of its affairs.

What is needed here is realistic, analytic thinking upon authentic data as to the specific acts of a leader. Such thinking upon such data is bound to

deflate some reputations. When we look for the particulars, thrones and bishoprics and large places in the sun lose their awesomeness. To the reasonably cautious mind, common acclaim is unimpressive; one has discovered the social assumptions and influences that too often are back of it.

Nevertheless, if we are not to fall into a disillusionment that is speculative or subjective; if we are not to make sweeping generalizations from picked facts, this critical mood must not forthwith reduce the greatly good personages of history or of the present to the mean and the commonplace. They will henceforth have less mythological and legendary set-apartness; they will be more like plain us (a mixture of qualities), but we shall not have a flat landscape. Yonder researcher in science or history may be not a whit wiser in a thousand respects than his next-door neighbor; even in his laboratory and his library lower and higher motives may jostle each other, but in sheer fairness and objectivity we must perceive that a high end that he labels "truth" lures him on, restrains contrary motives, and rewards him from within itself. The artist who believes in his art against the odds of conventionalized criticism; the medical man who, as practitioner or as researcher, never swerves from the main purpose of the utmost increase of health; the social worker who really "believes in people"—in the human as such—when social prejudices make this belief costly; the religious prophet who at the expense of persecution or crucifixion calls upon us to lift up our eyes from our pettiness to the coming Kingdom of God—these are true specimens of what the human can be and sometimes is in point of motivation.

Between the more creative, or the more favorably

placed, of these persons and the common run of men there is no gap or partition in the matter of motives. When we achieve a deep acquaintance with men, though we realize as never before the extent of their foibles, we come upon a residuum that evokes our respect. But deep acquaintance means something far more intimate and therefore insightful than our classifying devices. Of course, no one who exercises coercion understands those whom he coerces, and whoever exploits men is blinded by his point of view. A mere observer, moreover, an outsider standing aloof, may perceive more clearly than others do a part of what is going on in his fellows, yet his very aloofness, because it places inhibitions upon those whom he inspects, defeats his quest. Hence it is that the generalizations of the "hard-boiled" are never quite convincing to persons who live in friendly, cooperative relations with one another. The greater authorities upon what the common man is capable of wanting are those enlightened souls whose unself-seeking unreserve and participation in the neighbor's hopes and fears, and ups and downs, thaw out the ordinary barriers between man and man. Now, almost universally those who have had the widest experience in dealing with men on this basis of intimacy have the firmest faith in humanity. I do not mean sentimentalists who indulge humanitarian emotions at a distance, nor yet lovers who may—or may not—deceive themselves by over-idealization, but persons like some social workers whom anyone could name who unite a cool head with a warm heart. They, if anybody, should be disillusioned, for they, more often than the rest of us, witness frailty and frustration close at hand, yet they are most unshakenly respectful of the common man.

XV

THE MIXED MOTIVES OF BUSINESS

It is necessary to distinguish between the qualities of the industrial system and the qualities of the men who run it. It is true that they have created it, that they endeavor to express themselves in it, and that they interpret themselves by their own creation; but it does not follow that they have succeeded particularly well in expressing themselves, or that their interpretation of themselves is adequate.

There was a time when our ancestors expressed themselves in idols, the work of their own hands and imaginations, and interpreted themselves thereby, even offering human sacrifice as a normal part of the system. But we know that the wants of these worshippers outran the prayers that, for the time being, they were able to frame. The man was better than his religion.

May it not be that industrial man is better than industrialism? And if so, is it not conceivable that the mechanism of business that now tyrannizes over us as ancient religions tyrannized over their worshippers may yet go through transformations as profound as those that separate the Druid from the believer in ethical monotheism?

The gravitation of the *system*, we have seen, is towards a depressing view of human nature, and unquestionably the system is to some extent forming men in its own image. But even as they yield to

economic custom, they make excuses for yielding, and they hunt up excuses for the system that coerces them just as the idols of old coerced our ancestors. Such a system is as imperfect an index of the nature of man as would be a motor car running away down a hill because the brakes have been allowed to get out of order. In such a car human nature is both represented and misrepresented.

If, under such terms as "love of money," "desire for gain," "profit motive," or "economic motive," we think to explain the "go" of business, we shall be caught in an abstraction or over-simplification. It is as if one were to say that the reason why any man buys an automobile is that he desires to ride rather than walk. This is not misleading, but it is abstract and inadequate. The experience of riding, it is true, may beget a desire simply to ride and ride, and similarly the experience of making money may become a source of direct satisfaction; but any concrete situation is almost certain to be far less simple than this. The motives of business—later we shall see whether the same is true of the worker—are decidedly mixed. Let us see.

The vast majority of those who employ capital for the making of profits mingle their own daily labor in an intimate way with their capital. A truck-driver who owns his own truck; a small grocer who lives at the back of his grocery; a fisherman who owns his own nets and a "one-lunger" motorboat—what is the economic motive in their case? It is scarcely distinguishable from the motives of a skilled workman who makes no profits, but receives wages only. Enough for the family to eat; a comfortable home; opportunities for the children; recognition by one's fellows as amounting to something; a chance at amusements

and recreations (to own a radio-set and a motor-car, of course), and—very important—security against sickness and old age—these are the meanings of prosperity for such small capitalists, at least the fundamental and primary meanings.

One of these meanings, as desire for security, may become dominant; or secondary meanings may arise, as wanting to outdistance a particular competitor; and the individual may so identify himself with the mechanism of his occupation that his establishment becomes practically an end in itself. So complicated, and so modifiable, is the economic drive in its more simple and human aspects.

At the higher points in the scale of possessions and of power we see the same fundamental motives at work, but in changed proportions and with different proliferations. Some drives decrease or disappear simply because there is now a regular and abundant supply for the wants involved. When wealth comes, one no longer bothers much about mere necessities; instead, one reaches out for luxuries, for variety, or for intangible goods such as "standing" in "society" or in financial circles.

The desire for security, rather paradoxically, appears to grow rather than become quiescent when insecurity of the primary type recedes. The reason is that the possessor tends to identify himself and his family with his "pile," so that whenever the "pile" increases, not only is there more to protect against shrinkage, but there is also a bigger-seeming self to feel the loss. It is said that perhaps no other single motive plays as large a part in the minds of the financially already-strong as longing to get safely above the buffets of circumstance—to be utterly secure. But how much must one accumulate

if one is to be superior to the vicissitudes of fortune? In the words of Harry Lauder, "When is a man fu'? Eh? Eh?" I protect what I have by adding a financial outpost; then this requires protection. Thus the motive of security transforms itself into the policy of increasing possessions without limit.

Oddly enough, one of the motives of religion also is desire to be safe in a changing and largely unpredictable world.

I have been young, and now am I old;
Yet have I never seen the righteous man forsaken,
Nor his children begging bread.

The Lord is our refuge and strength,
A very present help in trouble.
Therefore will not we fear
Even though the earth be removed
And the mountains be cast into the sea.

Be not anxious . . . for your Heavenly Father understands that ye have need of these things.

All things are yours.

From facts like these some persons have drawn the conclusion that unquenchable thirst for possessions is in reality "thirst for the Infinite" mistaking its own nature.

Another factor or phase of the motivation of business is thirst for power. But this, in turn, is not a single or uniform thing; it is complex and variable. What is it to experience power and to rejoice in it? It is to be able to express oneself; to have the experience of being a cause; to exercise some specific talent; to be noticed of men, or followed by them; to construct or create something, or to cause something to grow, and to have it to contemplate and to

show to others (whether as farmer, breeder, artizan, author, artist, builder of a business or of a fortune); to feel stimulated instead of depressed in the face of obstacles; to feel that what one is doing is a game, a "sporting proposition"; to be fascinated by the everlasting "beyond"; to be thrilled by such an onward pull as a mountain climber feels who cannot be satisfied with any attained peak as long as a higher one is visible. Economic power may mean any of these; it may mean, too, possessing the means to do some desired thing outside the business, as patronizing art or learning, or carrying out a pet philanthropy.

When the economic motive takes the form of thirst for power, how like some of the motives of religion it becomes!

> They that trust in the Lord shall renew their strength.
> They shall mount up with wings as eagles;
> They shall run and not be weary:
> They shall walk and not faint
>
> I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me.

On the other hand, the power-motive can include, often does include, desire for mastery over the personality of others, and pugnacity or even destructive fury when they resist or stand in the way. Desire for selfhood and for mastering and creatively reconstructing the conditions of life, taken socially (*our* selves, *our* world), is the heart of ethical living; but, taken egoistically, it nurtures conceit, self-will, ruthlessness, and the illusion that achieved strength can satisfy by inbreeding with itself without creating beauty, or discovering truth, or promoting fellowship.

The motivation of the economic order is related, likewise, to our consciousness of the shortness of life. I am fleeting, but my property will be here after I have disappeared; can I not put the stamp of myself upon it? A college president repeatedly remarked to a man of wealth, "Mr. M, if I were in your place, I should build myself a monument." This, and nothing more, time and again, until the man of wealth remarked one day, "Doctor, I have decided to build myself a monument, namely a building upon your campus." To identify myself with something that will speak in my name when I am gone, something that will act upon men so that I still count with them —this, in some cases at least, is a constituent of the desire for gain. It may take the form of ambition merely to build up a great estate that shall bear my name; to perpetuate this estate in its integrity as long as the law permits; not only to endow my children and grandchildren with wealth, but also to prevent them from dissipating it; by my beneficence to be really good for something in the long future; to cause my name to be gratefully spoken of by future generations, forever, if possible.

Again, how like religion, with its interest in survival after death!

> All things are yours, whether . . . life or death.
>
> Make to yourself friends of unrighteous Mammon (said Jesus derisively) so that they may receive you into everlasting habitations!

Clearly, then, we shall only partly understand the driving power of the economic system if we fail to perceive that, like science, art, and religion, it contains aspirations to be free, to be recognized by

others, to fulfil the impulses of family affection, to enthrone personality above circumstance, to be a creator, and to baffle the grim Reaper.

The industrial revolution wrought havoc within this garden of motives. Factory production separates the experience of producing from the experience of consuming, thereby concealing something of the meaning of both. Moreover, in place of face-to-face dealings between men, which keep the human factor in the foreground, we now have mass or group relations between persons who never meet one another, and these relations are mediated on the side of capital by laws, rules, standards, and officials that represent a somewhat-less-than-human interest. The dominant assumption is one that can be expressed in a balance-sheet, which is merely a summary of the non-human aspects of a business—a summary, that is to say, of that to which no *meanings* are as yet assigned. Was there ever anything more abstract than a balance sheet? The business man, his family and friends, his employes, his country, his church, the whole human race might be blest or injured to any extent by his business, but the balance-sheet would not yield the slightest hint of the fact. Yet the balance-sheet—this abstraction—is taken as the main guide of business conduct!

The moral tragedy of industrialism lies not in the fact that we are so bent upon mastering the material resources of the world, but in the abstraction of this mastery from the motives that started it going and that give it its only meaning. But we have not quite smothered ourselves with the works of our hands; the man within the business man, fortunately, is commonly inconsistent with business philosophy. Prosperity is not the measure of his satisfactions

and desires. Though surrounded by plenty, he is restless; though efficient, he has not yet expressed himself. Something greater than industrialism is struggling to be born.

The evidence of this inner struggle can be seen in Rotary clubs and similar organizations, with their effort to promote friendliness among competitors, their interest in some forms of public welfare, and their emphasis upon "service" as the test of good business management. This talk about "service" does not yet mean, of course, that Jesus' principle has been adopted and selfish ends abandoned; it certainly means that I make the largest profits by consulting my customer's interests as well as my own; but even so, it contains a glimmering recognition that our real interests are mutual interests. Through this recognition some warmth and enlargement are coming to the business consciousness.

But there is another side to this consciousness—a side that likewise speaks of satisfactions not yet found. When men become nervously concerned for orthodoxy, assuming that an issue is already closed and that they have the key to it, we may be sure that there is a lurking skepticism within. Orthodoxy is organized distrust not only of unbelievers but also of believers, oneself included. And business orthodoxy grows apace!

Another sign that defence mechanisms are forming in the business mind is flight into generalizations and abstractions. I have spoken already of the element of insincerity in the perennial claim that public benefits flow from any and every scheme out of which I secure private gain. But this is more than mere tactics; it is more than an economic theory now outworn; it is also a flight into generalizations and

abstractions. It has become so much a habit that it has secreted from itself a sense of sincerity. The business of coal-mining is ceasing to be to the owners the particular facts of this mine and these miners; it is something larger, more general and public. I do not think we can otherwise explain the tolerance of mine-owners towards the facts revealed to a Senate committee that recently investigated the human conditions at mines in Western Pennsylvania. It is true that the stock-and-bond method of capitalizing an enterprise makes it difficult for the absentee owners, whether of a mine, a factory, or a power plant, to know what is going on. But it is not merely the absentees who escape the force of facts; managers who are close to the works do it too. In short, there is more or less shrinking on the part of business men from the literal actualities of business and industry; the motives thereof are not at peace among themselves, and the manhood of these men has not yet found the way of adequate self-expression. What the business man "really wants" he has still largely to find out.

XVI

MOTIVES OF THE WORKINGMAN

If you want to know the inside of the worker's mind, do not ask him any generalized questions about it, for, like the capitalist, the employe has his attention fixed upon the mechanisms of industry and upon the particular things that, at the moment, he thinks will better his condition. A generalized answer from him may throw no more light upon his complex springs of action than "love of money" throws upon the conduct of captains of industry. Do not ask his employer, either, what the worker really desires, for the employer will apply to others some over-simple explanation that parallels the one that he applies to himself.

Our best sources of general information are men and women who have lived and labored side by side with the workers in an endeavor to understand and help them—persons like Carleton Parker, Helen Marot, and Whiting Williams.[1] The return from such studies is not simple. You cannot compress the soul of the workingman or of anybody else into a simple formula, nor can you explain him by naming the social or economic class to which he belongs. The pigeonholing of men, by the way, is one of the major immoralities!

[1] Carleton H. Parker, The Casual Laborer and other Essays, New York, 1920.
Helen Marot, The Creative Impulse in Industry, New York 1918.
Whiting Williams, Mainsprings of Men. New York, 1925.

What the workingman wants, first of all, is work; he wants to be sure of a job. This means, for him, his foothold upon this earth. He wants to know where the next meal is coming from, and the more thoughtful individual determines that sickness and old age must not find the cupboard empty if he can prevent it. How like his employer, who likewise is struggling to rise above the vicissitudes of existence!

The workingman wants a job that gives him standing among his fellows. High pay can give him such standing; or an occupation that requires skill, or judgment, or daring; or even connection with a renowned or admired enterprise. Thus again, employer and employe meet in a common desire for social recognition.

The worker is bent upon amusements and recreations. They occupy his mind even at his labor, especially where high subdivision of labor permits the hands to be employed almost mechanically. Moreover, with the increasing mechanization of industrial processes, which implies ever decreasing spontaneity and self-expression, and ever-deepening dulness in the routine, thought turns with ever greater insistence to amusements that promise contrasting experiences of freedom, variety, strong stimulation or excitement, and social contacts. Not so unlike the experience of the employer, for he too, as his business becomes mechanized, builds up for himself a second world in which real living is contrasted with work.

Family interests affect the worker about as they affect other persons, but with this important difference in the application: Whereas the capitalist seeks to make the future secure for his children by endowing them with property, the workingman endeavors,

largely through the education of his children, to get them out of his economic status into a higher one, such as that of a "white-collar job" for the son and clerical work or school-teaching for the daughter.

Widespread, too, is "land-hunger," particularly among agricultural workers, though not exclusively among them by any means. To have "a place that one can call one's own"; to put thought and muscle upon a garden or a house, feeling that the results will not at once slip away out of one's hands and sight; to express one's very own taste without let or hindrance; to have one's personality identified in the community with something stable, like real estate—here is one focus of the ambition of many and many a worker.

Closely related to this attachment for the land is an impulse—alas, how often thwarted—to express one's individuality in and through one's work. You can witness the joy of creation in a child who for the first time makes a whistle that really whistles; in a housewife who achieves a new flavor in her pickles or luxuriant blossoms upon her window-plants; in a blacksmith when he fits and tempers a piece of iron just right; in anybody who performs the whole process of creation from raw material to finished product. Even in factories which, by subdivision of tasks, make this impossible, there appears now and then a partial compensation in that workmen identify themselves imaginatively with the establishment or its products. Notice the pride in the machine that one superintends, or in a piano or a locomotive that one has helped build.

The worker wants a large wage, but it is not true that this is his sole or all-dominant concern. Time and again opportunity for larger wages is rejected in favor of opportunity for self-expression, or pride

of workmanship, or social recognition. Nor is the desire for maximum wages an altogether simple motive. Increase of income may mean saving or insurance; it may mean education for the children; or more family excursions into open spaces; or a radio set in the home, or what not? The other day a gentleman remarked, "I have been amazed at the intelligence of my chauffeur who, as far as schools are concerned, is an uneducated man. The secret of it is that he has procured a radio set wherewith he listens to lectures and sermons. Every Sunday, he says, he hears a sermon by an eminent clergyman."

It is folly to look upon the labor movement as simply organized grabbing. It may become this, of course, precisely as a corporation may become a depersonalized snatching-tool for capital. But the demand for reasonable hours of labor, for decent working conditions, for a living wage, for collective bargaining, and recently for a share in the management of industries represents a wide and deep motivation. Everything that "my family" means to a man, or social recognition, or security, or desire for individual selfhood is included in the movement.

Yet it is not possible to take a roseate view of the pressure of industrialism upon the spirit of either employe or employers and financiers. A man who was subsisting upon the borderline between worker and employer had opportunity for gain by a shady transaction. It consisted in taking surreptitious advantage of a municipality in such a way that permanent gain would accrue to a corporation with which he was "in cahoots." He laughed at scruples, saying, "I'm going to get mine while the getting is good. They're all doing it." Of course it isn't true that all are doing it, but will anyone deny that the system in which both

worker and capitalist have become enmeshed exercises upon both of them a gravitational pull away from the wholesome motives that have been named in this and the preceding sections, and towards a narrow-minded policy of *getting* simply as such?

Industrialism in its present form unquestionably pushes into the background the motives of concrete well-living, and brings into the foreground a desire for "efficiency" or "results" as measured by a mechanical or abstract standard. Both employer and employe feel impelled to get the most possible out of each other, for the system as such (and its leaders insist that its "as-suchness" is both natural and reasonable) has no inherent reference to a possible mutuality in well-living for all concerned. Well-living is not the job of business or of industry, least of all mutual well-living; instead, conflict of interests is assumed to be basic and permanent.

In this assumed conflict of interests, possession is the objective. Hence the employer, since he already has possessions, which mean power, has an advantage which the worker sees no way to offset except by arbitrary action or inaction. Hence effort to "get by" with the least exertion; mechanized listlessness; loss of heart ("I'm not going to strain myself in order to increase his profits"); the warlike strategy of the union; resentment when defeated in this game of "get"; and, when conflict reaches a climax, resort to force. And, in and through all, the Tempter whispering that class-interest is a finality in our organized life, and that force is the final arbiter of everything.

This on the side of labor; and, on the side of capital, parallel abstraction from the more vital enjoyments, parallel drying and hardening of the mental

tissue, and final resort to cunning and force. There is scarcely a mean motive, apart from brutal lust, that does not now come into play upon both sides. And yet, the same men, both employers and employes, are partly actuated in their economic activities by motives that culminate in religion!

XVII

ECONOMIC PRODUCTION AS A MODE OF SELF-REALIZATION

Within the evolution of economic production one can read a story of the gradual molding of the human clay by human hands. Yes, *the* story of it, for the range of the interests that enter into the day's work is without limit, and the same interests, modified by the day's work, radiate outward into all phases of culture.

Hunting makes a hunter; fishing makes a fisherman; when man achieved the domestication of animals, he achieved likewise some taming of himself. When seeds began to be planted, and fixed dwellings to be built, then seed-thoughts were sown in the mind, and he who erected a roof "built better than he knew," for an advance took place in the structure of domestic society. In our own country we have seen the frontier produce the frontiersman, and industrialism a vastly different type of personality. Slave labor in the south created one sort of capitalist, free labor in the north another sort. The economic process and its economic product—whether weapon, tool, commodity of any sort—makes the man as truly as the man makes the product. The story of the day's work is the story of man, discovering himself, changing and diversifying himself, sometimes maiming his mind as well as his members with tools, weapons, and machines of his own devising, but again recovering himself and going forward.

In this sense an economic interpretation of history is possible; but it means, not that the whole of culture is controlled by "desire for gain" or any other narrow (and indeed abstract) spring of action, but that what we do with natural resources influences all sides of human nature and capacity. The new history, employing the polarizing lenses of psychology, reveals everywhere and at all periods unbroken continuity between, on the one hand, men's daily occupation of transforming raw materials, of getting and spending, of buying and selling, of employing and being employed, and, on the other hand, the substance of the social life and of the political order, literature and the fine arts, religion, science, and philosophy.

The economic order, that is to say, is not a thing *per se*. If church worship, or the goings-on at an amusement park make a strong appeal because they are different from the daily grind, even here we see the continuity. It is the man, the personal self, that has gone into the grind and that has come out of it seeking something specifically different. The personal self, though it has remarkable capacity for inconsistency and forgetfulness, contains no really watertight compartments. A point of view, or an attitude, that has become habitual in any sphere of life can control us in subtle as well as overt ways. For example, the laymen who most strenuously insist that ministers should attend to "spiritual" affairs, letting business alone, represent in their own persons, and that vividly, the impossibility of a real separation of religious experience from economic experience.

Production and distribution of economic goods at its best—nay, why should we not say at its normal point—is, then, a working together with God in the

creation, not so much of plants and fruits and domestic animals and structures of wood, stone, and steel, as man himself. The economic order is a chief sphere, if not the chief one, for the realization of personal selves.

This is the only coherent meaning that we can give to it. Therefore, whenever we find it turning out undeveloped, depressed, or distorted personalities, they must not be taken as by-products or incidents; they are the main concern, and therefore the system is here sick and self-defeating. To say that we are engaged in making goods and not men is in any case simply not so. We actually do make men of one sort or another in all our sowing and reaping, mining and smelting, manufacture, commerce, and finance. For better or for worse this is so; there is no escaping it.

But our modern world deludes itself on this point by endeavoring to maintain and cultivate a spiritual life *alongside* the economic. By "spiritual" life I mean the only thing that it can signify to us moderns, namely, regard for personal selves, all selves within our purview. This concept of the spiritual includes a scale of attitudes long enough to reach all the way from comforting a frightened child to worshipping God. We are self-deceived in that we have turned over the making of selves to schools, homes, and churches as their specialty, for the making of selves takes place just as truly and not less effectively in and through the economic order. We have rather lazily assumed, too, that the superior personal relations experienced or talked about in home, school, and church will somehow—rarely does anyone even attempt to say just how—pass over into the field, the factory, the market, and the financial institution.

Undoubtedly considerable seepage into economic relations does occur. For, even where the system is most mechanized, it is not quite shameless, and the sporadic cases of concern for human values are neither few nor insignificant in quality. Nevertheless, on the whole, we undertake to base our economic conduct upon economic principles that are supposed (though mistakenly) to be self-sustaining or even self-evident, and our ethical and religious life upon a contrasting set of principles, supposed (though mistakenly) to be likewise self-sustaining. The result in multitudes of instances is a dual life; always it is confusion, blurring, and relative inefficiency in the human concerns that most count.

In fact, the seepage from our spiritual life into the economic is largely or fully offset by a reverse penetration of depersonalized economic principles and practices into the very citadels of spirituality. Consider, for example, the prerogatives assumed by and commonly granted to "the man who pays the bill." Does the entirely unspiritual fact of carrying the purse give one a preferred position with respect to spiritual relations within the family? Yes or no? Does economic power, or does it not, either intentionally or by mere drift, determine what shall be soft-pedaled in schools, colleges, and theological seminaries? No one takes the trouble to deny that laymen of means have influence in the churches altogether out of proportion both to their number and to their religious intelligence, and no one questions that this influence colors the teachings called religious.

The spiritual does not succeed in maintaining itself alongside the economic. In the nature of the case, it cannot do so; the economic experience is bound, for

good or for ill, to be the area in which some of the chief character-forming forces are generated.

The present partition of ourselves into secular and religious, industrial and cultural, practical and idealistic is deceptive and ruinous. It results in half-conscious gropings, tangled purposes, self-defeating self-assertions, fallacious self-justifications, and diluted standards of spirituality. In consequence of it the economic order lacks definite meaning. It should mean production for use and for the enlargement of life all along the line, but instead it is not unambiguously directed towards any human good whatsoever. It feeds the hungry (some of them), but it also exploits their hunger. It indirectly supports education, science, art, philanthropies, and religion; but at the same time it promotes senseless luxury, conspicuous spending, a commercialized amusement fever, political corruption, and the kind of national economy that makes for war. If it has sharpened the wits of many, and opened to them wider vistas, it has likewise made multitudes of minds hard, materialistic, mechanical. It has produced class consciousness and class conflict so general and so acute that sober observers are wondering whether the system is not bound to destroy itself by its internal friction.

We shall not recover from this sickness by developing more spiritual life alongside an industrialism that treats persons as means rather than as ends, but only by spiritualizing the industrial system itself. The obvious necessity, the only way to spiritualize industrialism, is to develop through the entire range of its personnel the joy of being a producer, as distinguished from the satisfaction of receiving wages or making profits. When motives focus upon wages and profits, which are extraneous both to the thing

produced and to the persons who use the product, the realization of one's self in one's work is squeezed out, and the realization of other selves as benefited by us is squelched. Moreover, when the motives for production become thus uncreative, the goods produced convey to the consumer little or no ethical meaning; he procures and uses them as mere things, ignoring the human life that has gone into them, and therefore realizing no spiritual relationship by means of them.

If men are to be religious in any deep sense *within* the economic experience, the raw materials and the finished products that pass from hand to hand, and the machinery for manufacture and distribution, must acquire something of a sacramental character, becoming outward and visible signs of an inward and spiritual grace. To make a button, or to buy and sell one is, in reality, to participate in a great complex of personal relationships, whether high or low; right here we determine, in part, the level of our common life.

On the other hand, when the massive walls, arches, and towers of a magnificent house of worship arise upon some lofty point in a great center of population, what spiritual significance can one see therein? You answer that multitudes will worship God inside this structure. But what of the structure itself as an *economic fact?* Human life, the life of persons to whom Jesus attributed value beyond measure, went into the quarrying of these stones, the smelting of this metal, the mixing of this mortar, the financing of a multitude of major and minor operations. What happened to this life of persons through its participation in the making of a sanctuary? Did men find God, and one another as sons of God, here?

What is the spiritual significance, moreover, of the contribution that I make for the erection of this towering monument to our faith? How did this money come into my keeping? That is, what human relationships, what makings or marrings of personality, what wages of bitterness or hardenings of heart have gone thus indirectly into the edifice that is meant to signify divine fatherhood and human brotherhood?

Is our religious thinking so feeble that we actually expect to solve the problem of worship by saying and singing within the sanctuary sentiments that are contradicted by the very walls and roof that shelter the congregation? On the other hand, is our economic thinking to be so abstract as to go on assuming that the aspirations of the heart of man are for the inside of the sanctuary, and not equally for quarry, mine, mill, and banking house? The unstable state of both organized religion and the industrial and economic structure at the present time suggests that we are in the grip of an inevitable issue. It is not over-rash to surmise that we are going to have a spiritualized industrial and economic order, or else a pseudo-spiritual and actually degraded religion. Degraded, that is, by increasing subservience to an unspiritual system of dealing with the material resources of nature.

That there is any inescapable drag in the direction of such a fatal system does not appear from any broadly objective scrutiny of the motives of either capitalist or worker. On both sides mixed motives are the rule, and the two mixtures largely coincide. On either side one or another motive gains or loses influence by the shifting of conditions that are within our power. It is as if the ancient word had been

spoken to our generation: "I have laid before you life and death; choose life."

After three years' experience as a worker in mines and factories, Whiting Williams declares that the mainspring of the worker—we have seen that this is true also of the employer—is the wish for worth, the wish to be a person, to realize that he counts and that others recognize the fact; and, Williams adds, "through our work, if anywhere in all the universe, we may hope to become a person, meaningful and valuable—aye, indispensable—to others."[1]

[1] *Mainsprings of Men.* New York, 1925, p. 224.

XVIII

THE MOTIVE THAT IS IN ALL AND THROUGH ALL

The lines of our inquiry converge upon the following conception of the motives of men: Rooted in the conditions of individual and racial life are various "drives" that are related to nutrition, sex, avoidance of discomfort and danger, activity and repose, and the presence or conduct of other members of the species. But these are not elementary units that in their aggregate constitute human motivation. For, in and through them, using them, giving meaning to them, and creating new meanings through them, is the affirmation of a personal self, and the coordinate and equally inevitable affirmation of other selves. And this affirmation of selves does not consist in sucking at the breast of Nature, but in reconstructing the gifts of Nature, and in constructing and reconstructing ourselves and society to suit ourselves as our experiences, desires, and insights evolve.

There is an old distinction, which is both useful and necessary though it frequently is ignored, between two senses of the term "motive." This term sometimes signifies psychic pressure in one direction or another without forethought or consideration of results—what one may call a *vis a tergo* or "push from behind." In this sense, thirst for water, or sex-hunger, or spontaneous liking or disliking counts as a motive. On the other hand, an end-in-view, some-

thing that awakens desire when we think about it, a "pull from in front," likewise goes under the name of motive.

The difference between a psychic push and a psychic pull is not merely that between immediate and postponed fulfillment of action or of satisfaction, nor yet this plus the difference between simple and complicated drives. There is a further and even more important distinction to be made. Consider, for example, the following series of cases:

1—The reaction of a carnivore upon smelling raw flesh.
2—The conduct of an acquaintance of mine who, when sugar grew scarce during the War, seized an opportunity to buy a barrel of it for the use of his family.
3—In a canyon not far from where these words are being written, a county is building a great and costly dam in order to control the flood waters of the surrounding mountain slopes. Control of these waters means safety for life and property, irrigation for orange groves, and a supply of water for domestic use.
4—An acquaintance of mine worked hard and spent little in order that a son, still a small boy, might have a college education. Meantime the state in which they lived taxed itself heavily on behalf of a system of education that reaches from the kindergarten to the university.

An intimate history of the conduct of the individuals concerned in each of these cases would reveal primitive urges, as those for food, for escape from peril, for care of offspring; but in all instances except the first it would reveal also something more than just a summation of such rudimentary drives. Even in case 2 they are redirected, canalized, weighed against one another, dovetailed together, related to the whole significance of the family for its members.

In cases 3 and 4 it is still more obvious that work has been done *upon* the primitive drives, not merely by them, for there is organization of selves and organization of society that are not at all predictable from any scrutiny of raw drives; indeed, here power over conduct flows out of valuations that, a little way back in our history, could not have been felt or understood. We have reached a point where we are able to say what sort of selves we want to be; we have begun to have preferences concerning types of society; already, through law, education, religion, and eugenics we are upon the edge of deliberate control of the evolution of our species.

Thus far, for the sake of convenience in dealing with a complicated matter, I have spoken of primitive or raw drives or pushes, for the most part, as though they were so many separate and distinct actualities. In fact, however, hunger, sex-attraction, and all the rest are generalizations. In the human species at least each actual instance of hunger is less simple than mere hunger; each instance of sex-attraction requires, if we are to describe it completely, something more than an isolated instinct. With man, an instinctive satisfaction is not the terminus of a railroad but an intermediate station through which as well as to which he moves. The whole truth is that, though the raw material of our personal selves is given to or thrust upon us, just as sap is given to or thrust upon a tree, nevertheless it is from the beginning human material; within it from the beginning personal selves are in process of forming themselves, and society is in process of forming itself. This motive is in all and through all the dynamics of human conduct.

You can stop mere hunger by filling the stomach, but by no stuffing process can you appease the life-

urge that is human. Much of the devastating irony that Plato's Socrates directs against the Sophists is based upon this truth. Gautama saw the merely negative aspect of it, but he did not perceive, as Jesus did, that creative self-activity—ethical love, for example—contains a satisfaction of its own—a satisfaction, too, that is by no means to be equated with other satisfactions, since it bestows value upon them or withholds it from them. Self-discipline is a fact; so is voluntary acceptance of work, and even of pain and loss and obloquy. If men revile you, and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you, still you are blessed or happy if this experience comes because you are loyal to "the ever-coming Kingdom of God." It is partly by this transvaluation of values, this conversion of our native drives, that men now and then transmute both their environment and themselves into forms that yield unprecedented beauty, and truth, and fellowship. In human experience, I repeat, the motive of being a personal self among personal selves is in all and through all. It may be weak or retarded, or it may become distorted, yet even in conditions most unpropitious we find the spark not quite extinguished.

A few years ago, a one-act play, a curtain-raiser, entitled "A Morality Play for the Leisured Class,"[1] was given at the Neighborhood Playhouse in New York City. There were two characters, a modern man who had just been killed in an automobile smash-up, and an experienced inhabitant of the other world. The deceased, gradually coming to himself, and won-

[1] By John L. Balderston (New York, 1924). I shall take the liberty of telling parts of the story of this play in my own language, not scrupling to modify the plot slightly and the dialog considerably.

dering where he is, calls out in the misty twilight that surrounds him,

"Is anybody there?"

The mist clears away, revealing a shining Presence with wings. The Presence asks,

"Can I do anything for you, Sir?"

The deceased wants to know what's to be had here.

"Anything you like," is the reply. "Anticipating your desires, I have already taken thirty years from your age."

"Perpetual youth, eh?" exclaims the newcomer. "It looks as if I'd come to the good place, after all. But what about the golden crown?"

"You can have one if you like," comes the answer, and presto! a starry golden crown encircles the stranger's brow.

"Exactly according to the specifications," says he. "And now, what else have you got here?"

"Anything you like," replies the angel.

"I can have everything I desire? Absolutely everything?" asks the soul excitedly.

"Subject only to certain restrictions imposed by the nature of the place," is the reply. "There is neither pain, nor suffering, nor struggle here. Anything else that you desire I will procure for you."

There follows a succession of requests and realizations: The best of things to eat and drink; luxurious living quarters; "period" furniture and decorations; masterpieces of painting and statuary; the society of beauteous women (Helen of Troy, Cleopatra, and others). But each of these exalted experiences proves to be insufficient and finally cloying, and the experimenter demands a change. "This everlasting perfection palls," he says. "The sights are

too uniformly beautiful, the ladies too uniformly clever, charming, and obliging. . . . I know what I want! I want some work." But he discovers that, since work implies wanting something that one cannot have by merely wanting it, whereas here one gets a thing by merely asking for it, the satisfaction of work is out of the question.

He and his obliging attendant ransack their minds to think of something that might posibly relieve the tedium. The attendant, at his wits' end and discouraged, turns to go, saying, "I don't know what to propose, Sir. But if anything occurs to you," . . .

"Hold on!" cries the seeker; "I've got it! I want some pain; that's it."

"I'm sorry, Sir," comes the polite answer, "but no one is allowed to have any pain in this place. You'll get used to the restriction after you've been here a few thousand years. They all feel as you do at first, but they all get accustomed, after a while, to this mode of existence."

"But," ejaculates the neophyte, "I can't stand this damned everlasting bliss! I'd rather be in hell."

The Presence, stepping back and looking at him in astonishment, asks, "And wherever do you think you *are*, Sir?"

PART III

YET OUR CAPACITIES ARE IN BONDAGE

XIX

THE CYNIC INTERJECTS A QUESTION

Some cynic, my mind's eye tells me, is smiling over the picture of human nature that emerges out of the preceding sections.

"You think you have shown that the feeling of disillusionment that is spreading among us is a mood and a fashion rather than a rational conviction; that the psychological evidence of our essential lowness is weak; that our motivation is not a composite of instincts; that in the evolutionary order, of which we are a part, desires as well as structures evolve, so that the unprecedented in motives occurs and is to be expected; that mind is marvellously plastic, and in unconventional childhood is beautiful; that, under favorable school conditions, creativeness bubbles up out of the commonplace; that after the hot crucible of historical criticism has brought to the surface all the dross of both great men and small, it reveals also precious gold; that even within our selfish economic order high and fine strains of desire can be seen, as if a god were struggling to create a superior species through our mastery of natural resources. You find that, in and through the complex that we call our motives there runs a demand of personal-selves-in-the-making, a demand for mutual self-realization in an order of reason, beauty, and good-will, in the creation of which they are participants.

"All very soothing," continues the cynic, "pro-

vided that you keep your eyes straight ahead. But if you look to the right or the left of this reasoning, this is what you see: In form, the argument defends the dignity of life, but it does so only by picking out facts that shine by contrast with our everyday conduct. Practically everything that has been said includes or implies a protest against the ordinary run of human motives, valuations, and habits. Thus, the passage from childhood to adulthood is admitted to be a hardening process; it is admitted that the capacities for creation occasionally displayed by the young are generally thwarted, and that the very citadels of the spirit—the home, the church, the school—are infected with the unspirituality of our current economic standards and practices. It is made to appear, further, that the economic order, which might and should have a main part in the creation of man in cooperation with God, actually is an enormous mechanism that subordinates men—capitalists and workers alike—to a part, and the lower part, of their own motives, and these largely misunderstood.

"You have proved that human nature contains factors that the current disillusionment ignores or misrepresents, but you have shown also that the actual exercise of men's wills thwarts and imprisons the superior motives that you are so concerned about."

Thus the cynic; and he is right as to the facts provided that he does not exaggerate the extent of this thwarting and imprisoning of ourselves by ourselves. It does not necessarily follow, however, that basic cynicism towards life can be justified, however useful as a stimulus to inquiry the cynical comment may be. Men are inconsistent with themselves; they do obstruct their own steps, and they trip over

themselves. What, then? Shall we acquiesce in our blunders? Shall we end our forward steps in pity or scorn of ourselves? Or, shall we endeavor to understand what has happened, hoping that we may find a way to master the obstructive self that is within ourself? It should be interesting, at least, to inquire into the nature of this checking and thwarting of man by himself, for, in spite of the obviousness and the disagreeableness of the fact, it is relatively neglected by the very institutions that assume as their function the making of men.

It is true that religionists, moralists, and educationists for many generations have talked about an inner conflict of forces. It is represented now as competition between instincts; then as a struggle of reason with impulse; again, as a strain between egoistic and social motives. Though there is obvious truth in these conceptions, they do not touch several questions that must be answered before we can secure firm control of our situation. These questions are: Why is our performance so much below our capacity all along the line? Where and how does the leakage of power occur? How have we become inured to our own inconsistencies of conduct and of motive? What is the technic for recognizing real alternatives for what they are? What is the method for keeping a continuously open road for our wiser selves?

As far as I can see, neither our churches nor our schools are handling with aggressive vigor these overwhelmingly pertinent questions. Exalted capacities are, indeed, ascribed to man, and lofty ideals of conduct are unceasingly mentioned, recommended, sung about, and prayed about; but who offers a technic for getting these capacities to do their proper work?

and who really believes in the practicability of what he says?

This is a severe judgment, but it is a deliberate one, and if it is true it is not unfair, as it certainly is not unfriendly. My own life has been continuously identified with churches and educational institutions, and I would not have it otherwise; but I do not see how anyone who has intimate and sympathetic acquaintance with them can deny that they are suffering from a profound dualism that they know not how to heal. Of the general sincerity of their idealistic views of man there need be no doubt; that both church and school exercise a wholesome influence upon conduct in various respects is gladly conceded; it is their lack of plan and method for the organization of life, individual and collective, that is now in question. Now, this lack is about the worst possible; for it not only permits mint, anise, and cummin to get out of perspective; it not only foreshortens each institution's picture of itself; it also encourages the positive evil of an illusory self-organization in the form of fair words and fair sentiments instead of adequate purposes.

Assent to ideals, and emotional identification of oneself with America, the church of all ages, or the will of God can be a species of self-love and self-sophistication. Sunday after Sunday the churchgoer says "Yes" in his heart to the prayer of confession; "Yes" to the Godward aspirations of Scripture, hymn, and supplication; "Yes" to the admonitions of the preacher and to every reference to love for man and consecration to the Kingdom of God; and, departing from the sanctuary, he has a comfortable self-feeling because he is a "Yes" man. He is on this side, is he not? In school and college another set

of sentimental assents is evoked. Sportsmanship, patriotism, good citizenship, admiration for the honesty, honor, and unselfish devotion shown by our heroes—towards all these a "Yes," a sincere glow, and "This is what we are."

A large part of the economic power of the Western world is in the hands of men who worship the God of the prophets and of Jesus; yet we know that business and industry will proceed during the week upon principles other than those of love to God and man. The leaders of our civic life, and most of the followers, have come out of our own schools for generations, but neither our political parties, nor our officers of state, nor our accepted state policies clearly reflect the idealism of these schools. It is not hypocrisy that creates this gulf; rather, confused helplessness in the presence of mixed motives. There is even some awareness of this helplessness, but this awareness usually leads to little more than speeding up the "Yes, yes" experience.

What boots it, then, to have shown that the current disillusionment with respect to ourselves is illusory, if we don't know how to give the control of our lives into the keeping of the better elements that are in us? In fact, our discussion thus far has done little more than clear the ground for a tussle with our main problem, which concerns, not the existence of high motives, but the bondage in which we find them. What we must ascertain, if possible, is the nature of this bondage and how we can release ourselves from it.

And first, the nature of our bondage. Let us frankly face the disagreeable facts, not being outdone by the cynic himself in the ferreting out of irrationalities. Only so can we hope to find the remedy for our condition.

XX

OUR "LOWER NATURE" DOES NOT EXPLAIN OUR BONDAGE

If we could refer human folly all in a lump to our "lower nature" it would be convenient in several ways. For one thing, like those who refer their every slip to the solicitations of Satan, we should be relieved from the laborious and often disagreeable task of tracing out the particular threads of influence that make our conduct bad. On the other hand, every accusation against our "lower nature" really flatters whatever we happen to regard as our "higher nature." The Indian mystic says "Neti, neti" of the lower, finite, and merely apparent reality, while he identifies his true self with the infinite. Plato believes that, in his own person as philosopher, Reason, ever pure and uncontaminated, though it be associated with the passions, is manifested as a self-certifying and self-sufficient good. A parallel self-gratulation was provided by Christian theology through its doctrine that the Christian has a regenerated nature which participates in some measure in the infallibility of God. Similarly, our evolutionary relation to "the ape and tiger" is often used as a foil for displaying our true dignity.

But this attribution of our irrational conduct to our "lower nature" is altogether too convenient. It is like a child's classification of human beings into "good people" and "bad people." As "bad people"

are partly good, so our "lower nature" is not altogether low; and, as "good people" are not perfectly satisfactory, so—at least possibly—our "higher nature" is not altogether high. In short, this whole theory of our bondage requires re-examination.

In countries that are familiar with the Christian tradition, the classical instance of the supposed clash of two natures is that of Paul, who testified to a veritable warfare in his members. The good that he would do, he did not, and the evil that he would not, that he did. The more he struggled to keep "the law" the deeper became his sense of guilt and helplessness. How shall we understand and evaluate this experience? Not by manipulating merely abstract ideas such as perfect righteousness (details unspecified and unspecifiable), nor the holiness of God (specifications again impossible), nor sin (in the sense of a generalized sinfulness); we could not judge Paul's motives and desires without inspecting them in their relation to particular concrete situations, and this the record does not enable us to do. If, as seems not improbable, his chief entanglement was sexual, then the basic desire, as thinking Christians now agree, was not bad. As a sex-creature he was not bad *simpliciter* but only *secundum quid*. Moreover, it is not possible to affirm that his condemnation of himself was altogether balanced; he may have had a morbid conscience.

Whenever we are able to untangle the threads of impulse and to take into account the circumstances of each, invariably the reference of our defective conduct to our "lower nature" turns out to be mistaken —if for no other reason, because it over-simplifies the facts. Always what we find is a mix-up, and usually confusion. Witness, for example, the gamut of

motives involved, as we have seen, in the War and in our economic and industrial system. Therefore, whoever would understand our bondage must examine into the nature of this confusion; he must hunt for the specific conditions that give a bad turn to motives that are capable, under other circumstances, of building up instead of tearing down. The conclusion towards which these facts push us is that that which checks, thwarts, and imprisons our capacities is not a set of particular drives but neglect of some relation or relations within experience, or some twist in our methods of organizing ourselves.

If this inquiry tends to vacate the whole notion of a "lower nature" that acts as a drag upon us, it tumbles us into a problem with respect to the existence of a "higher nature." Are any of our drives good *simpliciter*, or, is the clue to goodness as well as badness to be looked for in habits of organization rather than in particular and ineradicable impulses? It is, in fact, easy to show that even within our better conduct the same sorts of floundering occur as in our worst behavior, so that the same problem of the organization of a self and of selves is everywhere present. We have, as gifts of our nature, neither radically bad drives against which we should arm ourselves, nor yet radically good drives to which we can fly for effective protection. No *vis a tergo* will either ruin us or save us. The thing upon which the issues of life depend is what I have called the motive that is in all and through all, the desire to be a self in a world of selves.

The real nature of our bondage can be illustrated by a chain of examples that reaches all the way from our handling of physiological good and evil to our prayers. All along the line we shall find that the

good and the evil, the failures and the successes, depend upon the organization of life as personal, and specifically upon the degree in which, consciously and deliberately, we face situations, with their alternative values, as wholes. We shall see that we are missing on an enormous scale good things of life that are not beyond our reach—things unquestionably good, unquestionably within our reach, unquestionably more important than the things towards which we do stretch ourselves. And all this is true of our more idealistic as well as of our less idealistic interests. Now for the examples:

Let us begin with health and bodily vigor. We put up with physical limitations that are entirely unnecessary—limitations that hygiene and medical science can remove. It would be economical in the financial sense to remove them, because our productive power would thereby increase along with the joy of living. Why do we persist in this conduct? We have everything to lose and nothing to gain by it. We may phrase the answer in many ways, as inattention, distraction by immediate stimuli, not connecting effects with causes, doing as everybody else does; but all real explanations come down to this, that we do not put enough of ourselves—our comprehending, difference-perceiving, organizing selves—into the matter.

We permit thousands of distressing accidents to occur every year. We permit them, for we could prevent them; we have sufficient experience of the dangers, we have sufficient scientific knowledge, and we have sufficient financial means. We could save thousands of lives without even feeling a financial pinch, and most of the lives saved would add to the financial resources of the country. But we do not

stop to think; that is, we do not put our whole selves into our conduct.

We submit to a multitude of unnecessary discomforts—dirt, smoke, noise, confusion, delays, undue fatigue, uncomfortable clothing, senseless customs. Our intelligence concerning the conditions of agreeable living, and our budgetary capacity for it, far outrun our plans and policies.

We endure unsightly spots in cities and towns, and the despoiling of natural beauty in the country. The persons who reap financial advantage from our esthetic impoverishment do so, not by their own inherent power, but by our acquiescence. Our trouble is lack of head-work.

We read inferior stuff, not because it is more enjoyable than literature, but because we wont take the trouble to enjoy ourselves. Thus, because we are "not all there," we let slip opportunities for exciting adventures in imagination, thought, and knowledge.

Our opinions are largely manufactured for us and imposed upon us, or else we merely drift into them and afterwards, perhaps, search for reasons in support of them. We permit ourselves to be treated as herds—some writers even using this term with respect to us—not because we are necessarily bovine but because we are unnecessarily absent-minded. That is, the human in us acts fragmentarily instead of integrally.

We are capable of having better government and better social relations generally than we have. We could afford them without risk of impoverishment and often to the benefit of our pocketbooks. Our good precedents, our weakly professed convictions, our known capacity for fruitful experimentation, all outrun our political and social practice. Often we are pig-headed, not because there is a porcine drive in our original nature, but because we get the habit of over-fondness for our half-thoughts.

We are capable of providing far better schooling for our children than we do provide. Even parental affection, which comes so near to being unqualifiedly good, is a main support for mistaken education. Moreover, education is a field in which most persons who have not paused to investigate believe, nevertheless, that they are competent to pass judgments. Thus, precisely where we think we are using our heads, we fail to use them enough.

If there were such a thing as a "higher nature," it should clearly manifest itself in morals and religion. In the sphere of moral conduct we should be able to discern particular drives that are worthy of invariable and unqualified approval. Ethical philosophy long endeavored to discover such pure springs of action, but without success. It is true, likewise important, that some broadly general types of policy, such as neighborliness, truthfulness, and industry, are usually safe guides. Yet, when my improvident neighbor asks me for a loan, or when an oppressor would use my truthfulness as an instrument with which to reach an innocent victim, or when I endeavor to apportion my time between work and play, then not one of these policies suffices as a basis for decision. "Love beauty" is good advice, but there are times when we have to decide whether to rest our eyes upon the curves of beauty or upon the harsh lines of actuality. "Pursue truth"; certainly, but just when is the moment for action upon the basis of present light, perhaps twilight? "Do as you would be done by"; of course, but how, under some circumstances, would I be done by? That is to say, in all such cases, the background-problem is, What sort of "I" do I want my self and others to be?

Is it not true that good men are forever getting in the way of the good? Consider any half dozen social changes that history has proved to be wholesome, and then count over the men who opposed

them at the time they were made. You will perceive that the mental clumsiness of bad men has an exact parallel in the moral awkwardness of good men.

The case is not different with religion. Considered from the standpoint of the drives that have made men pious, piety is by no means an unmixed blessing. For history shows that any desire whatever can receive the baptism of religious sanctity, with all the reinforcement that results therefrom. On the one hand, it is true, we see religion calling men to a life of righteousness; on the other hand, there is no meanness nor narrowness that has not somewhere at some time been a part of religion. For this reason, religion is the most dangerous thing in the world. It can promote either candor or prejudice, either self-will or sweet reasonableness, either ruthlessness or the gentleness of a St. Francis of Assisi. And no single religion can exempt itself from the danger. In this country at the present moment—to take a single case for illustration—there is a species of sincere Christianity that seizes intellectual freedom by the throat in order to choke it; that fans flames of hate; that commits deeds of lawless violence. So impossible is it to find in religion the especial seat of a higher nature! On the other hand, at various points in the history of different faiths, religion has turned critically upon itself, and by reorganizing itself upon unprecedented lines, it has proved that, though we cannot rely upon a higher nature made up of drives that everlastingly repeat themselves, nevertheless we have a capacity for never-ending criticism and reconstruction of ourselves.

These facts put the bondage of our capacities into correct perspective. We need not deny that untamed and partly tamed impulses tug at the bit, kick, sometimes run away with us; but they are

not our jailers. They make difficulty for us, they wound and scar us, but they have within themselves no coherence, whereas types of coherence within a self make all the difference between freedom and bondage. If anyone insists that human nature is depraved, he should place the seat of depravity in the rational man, or the supposed higher nature that is expressed in religion, morals, customs, government, social organization, and deliberate purposes generally.

If we conceive the matter in the terms of evolution, then the problem of our bondage centers in the latest-evolved, not the most ancient, phases of human nature; not in raw impulses taken one by one, but in the elaboration of conduct by thought and purpose; not in what is wildest in us, but in what is most civilized and taken for granted.

Must we say, then, that within reason itself there is an irrational lag? If this should prove to be the case, the wisest thing to do would be to make allowance for it and by deliberate policy to counteract it, just as the astronomical observer calculates and counteracts his personal equation.

XXI

HOW REASON ITSELF BINDS US TO THE IRRATIONAL

Every progressive thinker is troubled by the following fact: In order to live rationally, we must organize and institutionalize our behavior, which implies giving a sort of mechanical or automatic power to yesterday's thoughts. But as soon as any institution begins to be efficient, it resists rational inquiry with respect to itself. This is true of all institutions without exception. They resist—here is the heart of our difficulty—because they are not haphazard combinations but institutions, which is to say that they are a deposit of reason. Thus our necessary rational procedures imprison reason as naturally "as the sparks fly upward."

For "institution" we can substitute any term for a job that is deliberately done, or for any devotion that is a day old, and the proposition that reason imprisons reason still holds. Whenever thought makes a nest for itself where it can incubate, it turns out to have mated with unreason, and it produces a mongrel offspring.

How the principle works can be seen in the relatively simple institution of the family. For example, a parent who, in the course of family government, makes a decision with respect to the children, immediately adopts this decision as a precedent that is binding upon himself also. He won't budge from it; if it

is questioned he finds reasons in support of it; or, if he is pushed into a corner, he reasserts it upon the ground of the inherent rationality of parental authority. That is, by a process of thought he identifies himself with what he has been, and he equates reason with one of its incidental products. Many a parent-child fellowship has been wrecked in this way.

Just so, when the idea of sex-equality appeared upon the horizon, many a person prepared to defend the family against dissolution! Many a potential conjugal fellowship has been blasted because of unreadiness to re-think the old assumption of sex-servitude. One is unready to re-think it, not because of any imperious natural drive of the male to sex-mastery, not because the female naturally prefers submission, but because one has bound one's mind by a partial use and habit of intelligence; a has-been-so has been taken as inherently natural and reasonable.

The same sort of retardation of thought by itself appears, likewise, in our larger and more complicated institutions. For example, in the economic order at the present moment, in spite of its creakiness, there is enough that is humanly valuable to supply a basis for the reconstruction that is so sorely needed. Why, then, do we not delightedly hasten to build a fairer structure upon our present goodness? The usual reply that selfishness stands in the way, is a lazy explanation. "Innate selfishness" is perhaps the trickiest of all our merely plausible general ideas, for it applies to almost anything that we dislike in ourselves or anybody else, yet tells us nothing specific. The sticking-point in economic thinking is the point where particular drives or alternatives are adjusted to one another. This point, unfortunately often, is characterized by economic precedents taken

as dictates of reason or nature. Self-imitation, that is to say, has generated an economic orthodoxy which is the true "original sin" of the system. And it is the sacredness of the orthodoxy that makes the gooseflesh rise upon us when we contemplate the possibility of reversing our ways. We have sufficient stamina to stand losses or to get along with less wealth, but the uncertainties of a reconstructive policy make us quail. Thus we trust yesterday's thought more than we trust any fresh thinking.

Orthodoxy, which is the acceptance of yesterday's agreed-upon conclusions as an assumption that must govern today's thought, is not a sporadic or merely incidental occurrence; it insinuates itself everywhere; there are as many varieties of it as there are kinds of human association.

Political orthodoxies are, of course, rather obvious. The remark is commonplace that parties retain their coherence after the reason for their existence has faded away, and that, at last, lacking genuine meaning, they stand upon trumped-up platforms which often are a blind erected by hunters of office or by those whom they serve. The main support of bad politics is found in men who are not bad but only conventionally good. The difficulty with them is that they treat a petrified idea as if it were a living thought—they are politically orthodox.

Our laws, likewise, are streaked with anachronisms that at their best are clumsy and obstructive, but at their worst are instruments—well known as such!—whereby social obligation is evaded and injustice committed. The intellectual clarity of laws and courts is accompanied by an emotional haze, amounting at times to ethical obscurantism, that is taken as the light of a sanctuary, but is in reality the shrinking

into itself of a mind that is unready for fresh thinking even in its own field.

Forms of government and constitutions, too—living thoughts at the beginning—become mechanized thoughts after a time, and then they are a precarious asset. Precarious because, though they are properly only instruments to assist us in our adjustments to the conditions of life, they become the objects to which adjustment is made. The notion of sovereignty, for example—that ark of the covenant within the holy of holies of political principles—has become a mechanized thought and an obstacle to the establishment of any rule of reason in the world as a whole.

The professions and the other occupations, likewise, always run into the danger of introversion as soon as they begin to think about themselves. Each wants to fix its functions so that they will "stay put." Traditions of many sorts now become, essentially, dogmas; divisions and subdivisions of function are established, and each functionary becomes a breathing precedent. Machinery unending is interjected between the needs of client or customer or employer and the satisfaction of these needs. Some business men, it is said, have undertaken to create a tribunal of their own that shall settle their legal difficulties without resort to the law. What a comment is this upon the legal profession! There is a considerable area of human need that calls for both spiritual and medical help, yet physicians and ministers can hardly get together upon the most obvious cases because professional precedents have not paved the road thereto. Just so, the dentist goes his way, and the physician his, to the detriment of the patient, all because one is dentist and the other physician.

The orthodoxies of religion, whether conservative or liberal, are natural enough, for they reflect a sense of the greater issues of life and a sense of the importance of any truth about them that we may be able to reach. Yet the endeavor of piety to think itself and to put itself into the form of propositions has become a bane to piety. For accepting pious declarations both deludes us into classifying ourselves as pious, and excuses us from looking straight into the eye of actuality, whether contemporary or ancient. Limiting the freedom of the mind is perhaps not the worst thing about orthodoxy, though it is bad enough. Rather, ecclesiastical custodianship of particular religions or particular types within a religion, tends to displace thought-activity from the greater issues of life to the minor ones. The great issues having been settled, as is supposed, ministers, church boards, and denominational leaders betake themselves to making the church, which already has the truth, get the men, get the means, build machinery, and make it go.

How do we account for the ecclesiastical situation that is revealed by the church announcements in the daily papers of any large city? I shall not stop to characterize either the sermon topics or the publicity methods that are here disclosed, for this has been done many times, and the facts speak too loudly for themselves. Many explanations have been offered, but the background reason usually remains unnoticed. It is that the church already *has* religion. It has it, and therefore peddles it; it peddles it, and therefore all the devices of the advertiser, the hawker, and the auctioneer become appropriate; and because they are appropriate, the church that is most up-to-date in using them esteems itself the most enterpris-

ing. The ministerial and ecclesiastical jazz and piffle are direct results of having minds that are at rest upon the main issues. Reliance upon yesterday's thought produces the vacant, noisy mind of today. Orthodoxy did it!

Every orthodoxy, whether it emphasizes a formula of thought, or loyalty to an institution, or the propriety of an habitual process—every orthodoxy, whether economic, political, social, professional, educational, scientific, or religious (and we have them all)—every one, though created by reason, is a drag upon reason.

Yet orthodoxy is only an organized or social expression of a necessary and inescapable factor in the exercise of intelligence. It is because we remember, form judgments, make inferences, and then use the products of this process as data both for immediate decisions where action is necessary and for new judgments—it is for this reason that we are humans at all and not brutes. Our fairest structures are built upon past thinking as well as through present thinking. There is no other way. Irrationalism or pure romanticism may be useful now and then as a protest or as a spur, but this is never the horse that carries the load. Here, then, is our paradoxical situation: We must guide thinking by thinking; we must trust reason; but reason itself, in this process, binds us to the irrational. What would be a reasonable policy in this situation?

XXII

THE DEEP DEPRAVITY OF OUR RESPECTABLE FAULTS

Men check their own growth by self-imitation. Now, inasmuch as each self exists in and through reciprocity with other selves, self-imitation becomes a criss-cross of copyings. This mutual imitation of one another is "respectability."

Every healthy-minded person desires, of course, to have the approval of his fellows, and to be worthy of their approval. And this is no insignificant thing, for sharing, or universalizing, is of the essence of reason. But reason makes its characteristic slip; when individuals reciprocally approve one another, they forthwith generalize the basis of their judgment, whatever this basis is, and the generalization becomes a social fence with an inside and an outside. Our judgment may soundly represent a situation and a value, yet for this very reason we may fancy that we have reached the summit of a social mountain when we have merely come to a turn in the trail.

The momentum of a gyroscope can be given, in fact, to practically any way of accommodating ourselves to one another. The assent that "was" then becomes an assent that "ought to be." Reciprocal approvals are now funded and they become a vested interest of the stockholders. The stockholders, in the fashion of our latest corporations, do not even vote their stock—they merely draw dividends.

Two results follow: First, the ethical perspective that is required by free and growing minds is lost. The trivialities of respectability, when we look at them from the outside (as in the satirical novel and drama), are amazing. I am reminded of an incident in a college. A member of a sorority, being asked why one of the students who had been "rushed" had not been initiated, replied, "Well, at our 'rushing party' we had squab on toast, and she ate the toast, evidently not knowing any better. So we didn't elect her. We've got to draw the line somewhere, you know."

The reverse side to respectability's over-sensitiveness to trifles is frequent insensibility to master-values, as the work of creative thinkers, artists, saviors of mankind. Such work does not bestow respectability.

And not only is perspective lost; there supervenes a kind of blindness. Respectability means sanctioning conduct that is unfitted to new conditions that have now arrived, and condemning conduct that is. It means not seeing, or slurring over, or hushing up facts that could not stand the light of critical analysis. There is a self-excusing that produces a self-blinding that is worse for the world than straightforward badness. Respectability connotes the constricted mind, the involved and indirect mind, the self-deceived mind.

These are the reasons why dramatists can so easily make unconventional badness seem superior to conventional goodness. The recipe is simple: Place upon one side of the stage a typical conformist whose respectability is as easily read as a wayside billboard; a man who is orthodox in business, in politics, and in religion, and in excellent standing among his asso-

ciates; whose virtues are stereotyped and stamped with the appreciation of his set, and whose faults are ignored, or camouflaged, or possibly praised in the restricted circle in which he moves. Over against him place a person without social standing, a creature of strong and unconcealed natural impulses who is free from scruples, over-caution, and self-deception; one who is just his natural, uncalculating self. This turns the trick, and the audience applauds. Why does it applaud? Few of its members could tell you, and the psychoanalyst has only a fraction of the truth when he explains that our repressed instincts have release and go on a picnic through subtle self-identification with the character upon the stage. There is also gladness in having the way cleared for re-thinking, the acceptance of an invitation to judge basically, a feeling of liberation, not into unbridled instinct, but into a fresh effort at rational objectivity.

A woman who had been reared in a "protected" and conventional way, never guessing that she might think for herself, experienced in mature life an intellectual awakening that took the direction of extreme revolt against all orthodoxies, moral axioms included. She declared that she did not feel a need for God; was happier without any belief in him; and that she had rejected the whole notion of moral laws. "But," she added, "I believe in being decent!" She had not reverted to irrational impulse; she was endeavoring to let reason retrieve errors that arose through reason.

That membership in a circle of the respectable sometimes assists in hiding evil so gross that respectability itself would be shocked by it need not be urged, for it is merely incidental. The more important faults are the commonplace ones—the ones that

are common because they spring directly from the process that founds respectable society. Here they are:

1—Respectability is the standardization of compromises by using them as precedents. Compromising is, of course, not the same as discovering either truth or righteousness; it is at best a detour over a temporary and perishable bridge. Its service lies in keeping us peaceable or cooperative in spite of disagreements; its goal is not to repeat itself endlessly, but to fade into a no-compromise because we have come out into clear light. When we make compromise the standard procedure, then we sanctify our defects and bestow upon them capacity for unlimited progeny.

2—Respectability measures conduct in terms of the average performance, the average praise and blame, or the average acquiescent silence, of a limited society, instead of directly evaluating the consequences of an act for all the persons concerned. Conventional standards are not useless, of course, but they lack full ethical objectivity, and for this reason they can conceal as well as reveal. I can be "honest" in a transaction that is cruel; I can obey all the ten commandments and yet lack the one essential thing. Because the standards of respectability are not derived from the consequences of conduct to all persons concerned, but only some, it comes about that, without losing self-respect or forfeiting caste, respectable men as a fact do share in acts that result in nearly every form of inhumanity.

3—Respectability, fixing an artificial horizon-line for social fellowship, prevents us from knowing either ourselves or human nature in the large. We cannot know ourselves or others by merely noting how we respond to one another in a club or clique.

Many a hitherto conventional individual has found liberation and enlargement by fishing with an illiterate guide, riding with a cow-puncher, attending a meeting of radicals, doing social work in the slums, or getting acquainted with criminals or harlots. Between Jesus and such persons there was no barrier of respectability, as, on the opposite side, he had no prejudice towards persons of wealth, power, or culture. When church membership connotes respectability, let the church beware! Its Master did not belong to the respectable classes. The deep danger here is retardation of spiritual growth followed by fixation, self-complacency, and the use of one's power against the influences that make for a broader, more humane life.

4—Coordinate with this encysting of our ethical capacities is the habit, almost universal in respectable circles, of shunting the blame for the evils of the world to other classes of society. Even in America, where we have made so large a beginning of trust in the common man, it has been customary to assume that the main danger to the republic inheres in the "lower classes," which term denotes now the uneducated, now the unpropertied, now the hand-workers, now the immigrants, now the discontented.

The fact is that every major peril that we have encountered has had its seat "above" the "lower classes." Sectionalism, slavery, political partizanship, corrupt politics, a depraved civil service, dominance of government by the money power—these do not spring from the less privileged classes, however much these classes may have been used by leaders. If, as common opinion has it, civil government reaches its lowest level in our cities, the reason is found, not in

the character of the masses of city dwellers, but in the forces that organize them, use them, and exploit them for profit or for the advancement of a political party and the financial interests back of it.

There are just two ways in which those designated as the "lower classes" might become the means of our undoing: Some of "the interests" which have respectable standing might persuade, deceive, wheedle, or inflame them into the support of some evil that they could not originate; or, long-continued injustice and repression might lead to an explosion. No significant explosion of the classes in question will be brought about in any other way. In other words, what makes the "lower classes" dangèrous, as far as they are dangerous, is the respectable classes.

The depravity of our respectable thinking upon social and political interests shows itself, thus, in the actual (though, of course, unintended) meanness of blaming others where we ourselves deserve the blame, and even of attributing to others the evils that we cause through them when we use them for our own ends.

5—Nothing is more characteristic of respectability than its habit of finding exalted reasons for justifying conventional conduct, whatever it is. High ground for our conventional domestic conduct is found in the unalterable nature of the sexes, or in a trust committed by society, or in some ancient scripture. Reason for unlimited profit-getting is found by manufacturing psychology to order (the pseudo-psychology of the motives for enterprise), and in the old, comfortable middle-class self-sophistication that asserts that private selfishness is the best way to serve the common good. In ecclesiastical matters we have been much pushed in later years to find divinely good

reasons for our customary conformities, such as saying in worship what we do not mean; keeping straight faces in the presence of small men arrayed in large historical and institutional dignities; supporting a denominationalism that we say we deplore, and excusing an evangelism that obviously needs an explanation. We are put to it to place all these things within a system of rational thought, but we manage to do it, though it takes some culture to accomplish the feat. In education—I speak from the inside—it is positively funny how many old and creaky things, and how few new things can be justified by mere guesses.

This respectable habit of finding that we always are in every respect respectable makes it next to impossible for us to repent for even the deeper wrongs of conventional social practice. Even the harlots, Jesus declared, enter the Kingdom of Heaven before those who could give twenty reasons why harlots cannot get in at all.

All this separatism, evasion, and self-sophistication leads on with entire naturalness to the habit of reliance upon authority and finally upon force. Respectability never quite commits the adjudication of its interests to open ethical thinking. It regards its case as already closed. In other words, it claims for itself a privileged position for which the only remaining defence is force, in one form or another—economic force, partizan laws, ostracism, defamation, blacklisting, the denial of freedom of speech, war. All these are, in fact, appropriate once the main assumption has been accepted, and consistency is a virtue, is it not? Hence it is that these acts, some of which are positively base and not merely muddle-headed, do not produce self-condemnation among good peo-

ple. So depraved can our respectable faults finally become! This is not the hardness, of course, of minds that see themselves as they are and yet do not blush; it is still worse than this, for it is the hardness of the paralyzed nerve, the hardness of the eye that sends no light to the intelligence, the hardness of a blocked intelligence that closes the heart to its proper world.

Socrates maintained that to do wrong knowingly is not as bad as to do it ignorantly.

XXIII

EVEN OUR PASSIONS ARE PRECEDENT-RIDDEN

The problem with which we are wrestling is, How account for the low average performance of beings as highly endowed as ourselves? The usual explanation—that we are made up of two natures, a higher and rational one, and a lower and irrational one—turns out not to explain, for neither an unmixed lower nature nor an unmixed higher nature can be anywhere discerned.

A wide vista into the sources of our trouble opened, however, when we inspected reason, the discriminating and thinking function, not in abstraction or as an ideal, but in operation as a guide to behavior, We behold it saving us, indeed, from utter rawness and brutish fixity by analysis that indefinitely enlarges the range of selection within experience; but at the same time we discovered that it customarily stumbles over its own products, checks its own progress, and becomes an instrument of the very rawness that it should leave behind. This difficulty we found to be inherent in reason as such because thinking depends upon memory, and thought-guided conduct upon precedents. Precedents are necessary to thought-guided action, but they imprison us, especially through the social process, wholesome and necessary as this is.

It must not be supposed that we are handicapped by a down-pulling lower nature plus a lag in our

higher nature. What we have found is a hesitation that spreads through the whole range of functions as far as they are human at all. This truth is two-edged. It means not only that our reason is never, in practice, completely pure, but also that the instinctive or impulsively raw "factors" in behavior never can be isolated, and therefore never are factors in the strict sense but only abstracted aspects. They are as abstract as "pure reason." A few examples will show that even our passions are precedent-ridden, and that the control of them has to be effected by manipulating this thought-factor. Even in the region of ourselves that is commonly called lower, both the down-drag and the up-push inhere in the rationality that we regard as our distinguishing mark. If this truth conduces to modesty, it justifies also hope, for it means that even in our passions we discriminate occasions and reach after rational selection.

That precedents guide even our passions is not quite the same as saying that all emotional responses become "conditioned" after the first instance of them in infancy. Precedents arise through analysis, discrimination, and comparison, not automatically, and they can be changed and dethroned by the same process that creates them.

Let us turn, now, to a few illuminating examples. By the "passions" we are to understand such emotional eagernesses as anger, malice, revenge, jealousy, greed, lust; and we are to take the most volcanic of them, anger and lust, as objects of our especial scrutiny. The question is, Is there a thought-determined selection of the occasions upon which each shall dominate the individual's conduct, of the object towards which action shall be directed, of the form that action shall take, and of the distance it

shall go? Are there fashions here as well as in our appreciations of art and of religion?

Does anger arise from the same provocations and run the same course in a club, upon a college campus, among workmen in a factory, between "society people," between an employer and his employe, a teacher and a pupil, close friends, business competitors? Evidently not. If my friend craftily grabs the good things in sight and leaves me in the lurch, I am affronted; but not if my business competitor does the same thing. When a teacher corrects a pupil's error, all remains serene, but when a pupil corrects a teacher's error we cannot be so sure of calm weather. If one of my society acquaintances spills hot tea upon me, I am more likely to pity him than to be angry with him; but suppose that a waiter in a restaurant spills anything on me! What would be an insult in a club or on the golf links is only bluff geniality among workmen, or coltishness among college students. One of the most astonishing instances of the control of primitive feelings by a social precedent, preliminary practice being entirely lacking, may be seen in hazings and initiations among collegians.

So sensitive is anger to its setting within a system of ideas. Moreover, the particular expressions of it, when it does arise, are almost purely conventional. Whether one shall stiffen up in haughty silence and stare at the offender; speak a frigid word; utter a hot epithet; swear; or deliver a fisticuff, or a challenge to a duel depends upon already accepted notions as to what is appropriate in the given social setting. The object towards which it is directed, also, is often thought-selected. If I get "hot" when a dining-car waiter serves my roast and potato cold I

may "roast" either the waiter, the cook, the steward, or the railroad company. It appears to have been a custom of ancient potentates to punish messengers who brought bad news, but we esteem ourselves fortunate if our newsgatherers tell the truth whether or not it pains us. If some Chinese, out of patience at our delay in the revocation of the unequal treaties, insult and abuse or kill some of our nationals, our resentment will flame, according to our thought-habits, against the Chinese who did the act, against the Chinese people, or against our own officials who were dilatory about removing an irritation.

How far anger shall go, once it gets started, is likewise largely a matter of social tradition. In some circles of society, physical chastisement for provoking conduct is entirely proper, and it is administered then and there; in other circles, this so far offends good form that it scarcely occurs at all. Though knocking a man down for an insulting word may be applauded, kicking a man when he is down is the act of a "mucker." "Be ye angry and sin not; let not the sun go down upon your wrath." That is, though a sudden and temporary burst of this passion be excusable, the nursing of wrath is not. Yet there are populations in which the nursing of wrath until revenge can be had is the mark of a man.

Even lust is guided by thought-out distinctions. With one individual it acts within wedlock and stops there; with another it acts towards courtesans, but despises seduction; with still others it permits seduction of girls of other races or of a different social class, but not girls of one's own class and race; and all these differences between men depend very largely upon the male company one keeps. That is, lust acts by code. Moreover, every permission that any of these

codes grants is accompanied by prohibitions also; at every level distinctions are made between better and worse, and customs of regard for the better actually prevail.

The passions that sway men in masses are similarly obedient to precedents. You cannot account for lynchings by naming human instincts, nor by this plus a description of the crimes that lynchers seek to avenge, nor yet by adding a color-contrast between lynchers and lynched. Who is to be lynched, by whom, upon what provocation, and by what method depends upon a set of discriminated ideas already present when the provocation occurs. An acquaintance of mine tells me that, being in the vicinity of a town where this summary procedure was threatened, he took means to ascertain just what was done. In this instance—it is doubtless an extreme one, but it is none the less instructive—the populace assembled at a prearranged hour and without tumult; prayer was offered; the victim was calmly hanged from a bridge, and his body was riddled with bullets; after which, this business being attended to, the crowd went about its other business. If most lynchings are less orderly, they nevertheless are ruled by the same sort of traditions; see how alike these crimes are, and how unruffled the surrounding populace can remain.

It should scarcely be necessary to say how conventionalized are the passions that make nations fight one another. Like the personal-honor code of the duelist is diplomacy's schedule of the degrees of possible offensiveness in the conduct of other nations and their representatives, with a parallel column for appropriate ways of resenting each sort of disagreeableness. And the extreme mode of resentment, war, has a definite place in this code. Nations do not wait

to be hurtled into war by explosions of popular wrath. The matter is much more in the control of reason than this. War-making is one of the legally recognized functions of the state, and all the necessary machinery—from secretaries of war to a supply of gas-masks—is kept constantly on hand. How odd it is that the people as a rule think of wars, even modern wars, as calamities that, like a tornado or a tidal wave, just happen, or as a horror that "bad" nations thrust upon "good" ones. Wars occur, just as fisticuffs or shootings occur among a frontier populace, and just as measured words of resentment are spoken where culture prevails, namely, as an expression of the recognized system for dealing with situations of certain sorts. There is nothing inevitable about any of them.

When an individual follows the social code of resentment from a sense of duty rather than from hot passion, we find the situation amusing. But when a people that does not desire to fight is governed by officials that do, then occurs the most remarkable, as it is also the most tragic, example of the actual relation between passion and precedent. The populace must now be worked up into a mood that will impel them to kill and to do it with a clear conscience. And how is the war-passion, in fact, aroused? By bringing the proposed or already-declared war under some appropriate precedent or precedents. Farmers and grocers, say, have not kept up with international events sufficiently to know what the friction is all about, or which side is right if either side is, or what probability there is that war will set things right; but they won't submit to a foreign invader or oppressor, they love their country and its traditions, and they hate the ruthlessness that ravishes women,

and starves and mutilates children and wounded soldiers. So, it is

> "Fight for your altars and your fires;
> Fight for the green graves of your sires,
> God and your native land!"

The whole scheme of war-propaganda consists in inducing people to classify another country, or a foreign leader, or events under appropriate headings. So precedent-ridden is the passion that has rent the world asunder and now threatens to destroy it.

The struggle to control and guide any of our passions, or if need be to cause them to atrophy from disuse, must be directed chiefly to current assumptions, types of thought, social standards, and customary classifications. This is one reason why the world cannot be saved by rescuing individuals one by one from their evil ways. While we are rebuilding one individual in this way, social precedents are stamping themselves upon ten children. It follows that the reconstructive work of religion and of education must be done chiefly by discrediting currently accepted precedents and causing a rethinking of the alternatives.

XXIV

FREE MEN FEAR THEIR FREEDOM. WHY?

Our fathers gave their all that we might be free, but we are abashed by the bequest that they have left us. We are abashed, not by the moral grandeur, the holiness, of our inheritance, nor by the height of the obligations with which it endows us, but by apprehension that the inside of it may not be as fair as the outside. We decorate ourselves with the name and the glory of free men; they grace our historic records and our festal occasions; but in our daily conduct we accept the functions of free men with reservations. We are "judicious," as we call it.

The paradox of liking and disliking freedom at the same time is not a superficial one; it is deep in our nature; it is an apparently inevitable seesaw in our motives. There is in our endowment something so grand that ordinary men accept any privation in preference to comfortable slavery. So majestic is the mind of man when it is aroused that no pain that our fellows can inflict counterbalances the value of uncoerced thinking and speaking. We know that this freedom, with all the risks and burdens that it entails, is fundamental to every great thing that humanity has done in the modern period. Milton's *Areopagitica* and the First Amendment of the Constitution of the United States are flags upon the mountain peaks of history. Nevertheless, the meaning of every achieved enfranchisement is in practice toned down by the

enfranchised themselves, and in consequence even our old and taken-for-granted liberties have continually to be rewon.

The sincerity of this cautiousness is not to be questioned. For we are apprehensive not only that social classes other than our own, and other individuals (as, the young) will fail to "make a wise use of freedom," but that we ourselves shall fail to do so. We are on guard against our own enjoyment of powers and prerogatives that nevertheless we highly esteem. Father and mother, instead of being eager to confer freedom upon their child as rapidly as possible, make it their policy to shield him as long as possible from the dangers of freedom; and in accord with this policy they measure the correctness of their own conduct in the presence of children by its restraints, not by its resistance of restraints. Teachers, likewise, from the elementary school to the college, are as a rule engaged in putting upon young spirits a yoke made by others instead of assisting pupils to make harnesses of their own. It is regarded as an achievement of good teaching when pupils are kept happy and active in the process of being yoked to precedents. And teachers themselves are an ensample to their flock. If there is anybody in the world who, under a régime of freedom, should be characterized by constant unfixing of precedents, it is the teacher, but it is safe to guess that not one person in a thousand could name an instance of it in any school.

If we were to judge religion by its great creative periods, we should perhaps say that the religious leader, even more than the teacher, should be a dyed-in-the-wool user of freedom. But, obviously, the fear of a flexible faith is greater, except at crisis-points in religious history, than the fear that faith may be-

come stereotyped, mechanical, and dead. In nearly all ecclesiastical folds, if not in all of them, it is assumed that no clergyman "of good judgment" will use all the liberty that the constitution and the laws of his denomination permit. There is an unwritten law of repression within the written guarantees of liberty. Many years ago a Catholic professor was asked whether the advice of the Pope upon a certain point in education was an *ex cathedra*, officially authoritative, pronouncement. "No," said the professor, "but we obey it just as if it were." A passage from John Wesley concerning the Virgin Birth was submitted to a Methodist Episcopal bishop with the question whether this—the source not being named—was a view of the matter fit for a Methodist. The bishop's reply was an emphatic negative. Upton Sinclair trapped a ministers' meeting by reading a fresh translation of the denunciation of rich men in the Epistle of James and attributing the words to Emma Goldman. Most of the ministers thought that such utterances justified putting her into prison.

If we drew our presumptions from history, we should assume that, in every area of church life, what is now going on is partly valid and partly not; and believers in the *status quo* and disbelievers in it would discuss each question upon a plane of friendly equality. But they do not meet as equals; the freedom to repeat our thoughts is, so to say, greater than the freedom to do fresh thinking. Note how many liberals strive, as far as honesty permits, to make it appear that they are not radical nor anything more than progressively orthodox. That is to say, it is taken for granted that something has the precedence of real freedom. Churchmen have no such fear of their past as the facts warrant; their fears always

prick up ears towards anything that is in any significant way novel. Was ever a minister brought to trial for backwardness of mind, or for obstructing the freedom of others? And did the acceptance or rejection of any candidate for the ministry ever hinge upon whether he was sufficiently liberty-loving to guard the guarantees of freedom in the church constitution? The fears are on the other side, and there the defenders of the faith patrol their beat.

As for individual ministers who believe in real freedom yet submit to the informal censorship of church opinion, it is by no means necessary to suppose that they sell their silence for place or salary, though the spiritual peril here is immeasureable. Some of them, without doubt, by their really large and just-permitted variations from the ordinary, are helping to keep alive the tradition of freedom. On the other hand, what shall be said of those who, though they believe in freedom in the abstract, are convinced that, if it is not actually a subordinate interest of the spirit, at least it can better afford postponement than other interests? It is fair to say that they lay it away in a napkin.

I should not like to have these remarks add force to the common opinion that religious institutions are inherently more repressive than others. This opinion is at least a grave exaggeration. It forgets the glorious chapters in religious history that record the identification of faith with the bursting of bonds—ecclesiastical, political, social, intellectual, ethical. It forgets, too, the character of our secular institutions. Let us look at a few of them.

Within the tradition of academic freedom, exactly as within ecclesiastical practice, there exists an unwritten law of abstention. It restrains professors and

administrators alike, though at different points. Not all professors or all administrators, of course, but the great mass of them. Self-restriction expresses itself in solicitude for "the standing of the institution"; in the professor's choice of his field for research and publication; in acute tenderness for the immature judgment of students (most of them either in possession of the ballot or about to reach their majority); in the censorship of student publications that criticize the social and educational *status quo;* in decisions as to what speakers may be heard upon the campus; in the use of the term "good judgment" or its opposite when variant professors are attacked; in the selection and promotion of members of the staff; in the budget; in consciousness of the legislature at state institutions, and in consciousness of the donor at others; finally, in the development of the present dominant type of college and university administration. If we compare state institutions with privately endowed ones in these matters, we do not discover any great difference. The same scale, from overt repression, through tacit abstention, to courageous championship of real freedom, is found filled up by both, and institutions representing the religious motive have no distinctive place of their own upon this scale. Fear to use academic freedom is not a mark of either religious or secular institutions; it is merely academic! In short, real freedom for the mind is as much a problem in our day as in that of Galileo. It is the subject-matter that has changed.

Not that hypocrisy is in the academic saddle. No; our trouble is the confusion that arises from sincerely believing in freedom but also sincerely fearing it. This is why technicalities of procedure play so large a rôle; this is the reason why so much depends

upon judicious silence. It is because we are not quite at one with ourselves in our own souls that what might be the lusty exercise of our powers of variation becomes merely the absence of certain external restraints. Fear puts us on the defensive; whereupon, quietly reducing the points of possible attack appears to be a dictate of practical wisdom.

The handling of freedom in our legal system is not a whit more daring than in our ecclesiastical and educational institutions. It is not customary to construe particular laws in the spirit of an expanding liberty; nor do courts, as a rule, endeavor to get at the core of justice, ethically considered. The technical theory of their function is that they are umpires between litigants, responsible merely for seeing that contests are conducted according to prescribed rules.

In fact, and of course, courts are and must be more than this; they cannot be merely automatic appliers of laws and precedents. We do not impugn the integrity of judges if we say that they cannot help being influenced in their decisions by their understanding of the world in which they live, and also by their own appreciation of values in life, in society, in law and government. It was no statutory obligation, but his chosen use of the discretion allowed him that gave its noteworthy character to Judge Thayer's conduct of the Sacco-Vanzetti trial. In the celebrated contest over a sweat-shop law in the State of New York, it was a belated outlook upon industrial changes that dictated the first decision of the Court of Appeals, and a changed outlook that brought about the reversal of it. Appointments to the supreme bench of the United States are not made upon the basis of ability, probity, and experience alone; the appointing power has regard also to social attitudes.

The subsequent votes of appointees cannot be accounted for without recognizing the influence of these attitudes.

All this has been pointed out again and again. The purpose of saying it once more is to raise the question why courts do not more often give the weight of their discretion to the expansive use of freedom? Why do not judges openly and frankly avow the principles that control them when they perform discretionary acts? Why minimize the fact that discretion is used and that thereby something new under the sun might be brought to birth? Consider the often-cited treatment of "freedom of contract." Since coercion takes new forms in our changing society, it was inevitable that real freedom of contract should move its old line fences. But how timid the legal and judicial mind has been toward the plain fact, and how reluctant to draw the necessary inference. Timidity counsels, "Make no new precedents." The short of it is that here is the same fear of freedom that we found in parents, clergymen, teachers, professors, and college administrators.

Even the specific guarantees of freedom that we have incorporated into our organic law do not get themselves enforced with the simple directness that should mark real faith in them. Liberty of speech, of press, of assemblage, and of domiciliary privacy, as liberty was understood and intended by the framers of our scheme of self-government, is boldly invaded in several of our states by the police, the executive arm, and the legislatures. And the courts comply, as they surely would not do if the mental climate were to change. Now, it is especially interesting to note that the police never stop a meeting of jingoes and fire-eaters even though they advocate illegal violence;

that no legislature has attempted to put a check upon those who would subvert the constitution by suppression of freedom; that those who actually have interfered with the constitutional liberties of others go unpunished; and that a Department of Justice that keeps a wary eye upon pacifists is untroubled when beliefs and policies like the following are blazoned: That force is the ultimate arbiter in human affairs; that our government must act accordingly; that we should enforce our economic self-interest against our weaker neighbors regardless of their liberties; that there is an inevitable clash between our self-interest and that of other great powers (sometimes named), and that we must fight these powers, not relying upon conciliation, arbitration, or anything else that signifies that humanity is capable of growing towards rationality in its conduct.

The paradox of all this deepens towards the ridiculous or the tragic when one discovers that these men who despitefully use the constitutional guarantees are fervid worshippers of the Constitution, and firm believers that the founders, who based their policy upon trust in human nature, made the greatest political discovery of all ages, a discovery that is destined to bless the whole world! Here is intellectual hara-kiri. Asked to explain it, those who practice it tell us sincerely that they believe in freedom as an everyday method of getting along; it is only when we get into a pinch, when vital interests are at stake, or when freedom is abused, that suppression is required. What deep distrust is this! The freedom that cost our fathers so dearly precisely because it applied to the major and contested concerns of society now becomes a convenience in handling small affairs but is of no use in emergencies.

In all these mixings-up of faith and unfaith in our supposably achieved liberties one can discern a foundation-issue in our philosophy of life. The whole universe of our experience—the solid earth, the sea, the sky, the past and present of society, the achievements of science, the devices and desires of the heart, the inspiring faiths—all this confronts us with the question, What do you really want, and how much will you dare on behalf of it? Our answer involves our assessment of our own selfhood. Usually the alternatives for our enterprise are, on the one hand, increasing or stabilizing some conventional and comfortable function, or, on the other hand, reaching after an unconventional blessing that costs the pain of self-reconstruction. We cannot have brotherhood, democracy, industrial justice, world-peace, *or freedom* at a lower cost than this. Shall we, then, experiment, explore, adventure in the area of selfhood as we are doing at the present moment in the sky? Can the mind, as well as the body, support itself in a less dense medium than that in which it has moved in the past?

The scientific movement has made us daring in the realm of ponderables but not with respect to ourselves. Pure science seeks only one value, that of knowing the connections of things; its one interest in personality is that scientific method should be employed; its one interest in freedom is this. In our academic institutions a spiritually delicate sensitivity at this point may be joined with indifference to freedom in the other essays of man. A kind of daring different from that of the laboratory or even of polar exploration is required if we are to cast off the moorings of an old selfhood and voyage forth in search of new spiritual continents.

Further, the scientific spirit can be and often is inattentive to the life-values or dis-values that are promoted by the application of its discoveries. The uncriticized purposes of the present, accordingly, have unobstructedly capitalized on their own static behalf our enormously increased power over nature. Indeed, these purposes, because they use new and shining machinery, have actually acquired something of the éclat of the sciences. A current writer, according to an announcement that has appeared since this chapter was begun, declares that science has actually been accepted as a sort of messiah, deliverer, or solver of life's final problems—a rôle for which it is totally unqualified.[1] The obverse of this attitude toward science is inertia toward the values that science as such does not feel.

The weight of precedent is, indeed, on the side of force, not of cooperative thinking, as the arbiter of human relations; it is on the side of class privilege, not of democracy; of repression, not of liberty. But always the light shines in this darkness, though the darkness comprehend it not. For nobody wants sheer force, nobody approves all that class-selfishness implies, everybody believes (after a fashion) in liberty even though with contradictory restrictions. The picture is that of a world of personal selves in evolution. If, in any species that belongs to an evolutionary order, thought mixes with desire; if self-guidance arrives at all, these paradoxical inconsistencies are bound to occur. The present satisfaction, once thought about, is certain to resist any and every not-yet-experienced good. There always will be trepidation when the half-gods go.

But, wherever thought and desire do mix, there

[1] Ayres, C. E., Science the False Messiah.

occurs the process of emancipation from authority; freedom is the very soul of moral evolution. We see why it is feared; but need it be? Is it not possible to devise a technic for freedom whereby we shall be somewhat less inconsistent, somewhat less distrustful of one another, somewhat more wisely venturesome in the realm of selfhood?

XXV

THE MOTIVES OF YOUTH COMPARED WITH THOSE OF AGE

The problem of freedom and restraint, of impulse and reason, of the real nature of human motive forces, comes far to the fore to-day in world-wide perplexity over the present restlessness of youth. Our young people won't "stay put." Many of them refuse to postpone life's satisfactions—"they want theirs now." A few are asking the critical questions, wherein life's greater satisfactions consist, and whether our present ways of life lead toward them. On all hands there is a loosening of the bonds that tie the present to the past; the face of youth is towards the future, whether the next evening or the next century. Here, accordingly, is an unparalleled opportunity to "see the wheels go 'round" in human conduct. Here is life only a step removed from naïveté; and here is a display, side by side, of inexperienced youth and experienced age.

Perhaps it would not be misleading to say inexperienced youth with "the lid off," and experienced age with "the lid on." What, then, are the main differences between them in point of motivation? The usual answer is simplicity itself—that is, the answer usually given by experienced age. These youngsters are carried away, we are told, by "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life"—to use an ancient phrase for pleasure-seeking instincts;

whereas—so the assumption runs—we oldsters are guided by a rationality that governs our instincts and keeps them in their place. Most persons of maturity are sure that, in the by and large, experience brings wisdom, that the rules and precedents that the mature observe are dictates of practiced reason, and therefore that youths who do not follow substantially in our footsteps act irrationally, and thereby subject themselves to the penalties of rashness.

This view of the matter contains a grain of truth, of course, but only a grain. A burnt child does dread the fire, but a child with a stomachache does not dread the unwholesome food that produced it. "Experience" at the dining-room table often results in wrong dietary habits that even maturity regards as right. "Experience" as a parent can fix upon the mind the most futile and injurious conceptions of parental authority—it has done so in multitudes of cases. "Experience" as a teacher fastened upon us a kind of school-teaching that we are now struggling, with enormous effort, to free ourselves from. So, in statecraft, in churchcraft, in industrial and economic relations, in social customs, we oldsters are dragging about with us a terrible weight of unnecessary and injurious habit and precedent. In fact, experience has brought us, along with some wisdom, a lot of unwisdom which it has baptized with the sanctity of our years.

Accumulation of experience or of years is not of great inherent significance; neither is the lack of years. What is important is the way in which we deal with experiences as they arise. This is the problem for age and youth alike, and here is the basis for the most useful approach to the youth-question. It is not enough to say that in childhood and adolescence in-

stinctive impulses are more varied and more clamorous; nor have we said enough when we add to this that in our day there is an unusually wide cleft between the ways of the young and the ways of the old. The really important comparison is that between the characteristic technic of the young and of the old in the making and the unmaking of approved precedents.

When we make this comparison, what do we find? On the side of age we find man measuring himself by his own past, mechanizing the wisdom of yesterday so that it cannot grow through to-day's experiences, making his own imperfections into virtues. We behold, consequently, accumulations of property, of personal and institutional influence, and even of scientific knowledge bolstering customs and standards after they have become plainly questionable. If we of the older generation had the grit to be historically, psychologically, and ethically realistic towards ourselves, we should see the irony of our position. We have a timid wisdom, a self-restricting wisdom, a pseudo-wisdom, for we have no adequate technic for getting out of new experiences what they could teach us, nor for graduating from precedents whose teaching is already completed.

When the Disciples asked, "Who is greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven?" Jesus set a small child in the midst, saying, "Except ye become as little children, ye cannot enter the Kingdom of Heaven."

On the other hand—what a paradox! who is more unwilling than an adolescent to become as a little child? Are modern youths very ready to learn? This is the test for them, and when they prove that they are in the attitude of learning, they must next show whether they will take the trouble to acquire a technic

for learning. We say that youth is forward-reaching; it thinks in terms of the future. But in what sense is this true? Most commonly in the sense of aspiration to be classified with adults and to enjoy their prerogatives. It does not usually mean a stretching towards any unprecedented good. Youth sheds the precedents of its own childhood only to adopt the precedents of those a little older than itself! The "flapper" of fourteen gets herself up and conducts herself as if she were eighteen at least; the boy of sixteen wants to be "a man of the world" right now; almost any youth of twenty can be relied upon to conform scrupulously to the customs of some group, set, or type that, in his estimation, has "arrived."

Heedlessness of precedents is not characteristic of youth. Youth is avid for them. If satisfactory ones are not found in the generation that is just ahead, any pleasant thing that happens twice is seized upon and stereotyped. Placed in as free an environment as the modern college campus, young people form rigidly conventional groupings and adopt rigid campus customs. The average college student cannot stand alone; he is a very bond-slave to social precedents; and he is one of the most intolerant critics of those who are more individual than himself. Even at the points where modern youths flout adult conventions, other conventions quickly form. The very follies of youth are conventionalized. Why the hip flask at dancing parties? Why the present wave in the ancient stream of "petting" and "necking"? Why is "jazz" for the time being the only music that is interesting? Why Valentinitis? Doubtless the starting-point of each of them is a particular situation that involves a stimulus or a deficiency, but the rapid spread occurs through imitation and mutual suggestion;

and the self-accepted excuse or justification lies, not in the nature and results of the act or the experience, but in the fact that it is the conventional or expected thing.

The similarity between the ways of youth and the ways of age is remarkable. Think of the money and the time that adults have spent in the last ten years in order to listen to radio trash. Compare the silly social compulsions of the college campus with the force that compels everybody to stand whenever "The Star-Spangled Banner" is sung or played. Or compare, in point of mental process, young women's adulation of Valentino with mature men's adulation of Coolidge. Does any fever of modern youth reach a higher temperature than automobilitis among the parents?

Moreover, just as it would be unfair to the present generation of mature men and women to characterize it solely by such flightiness, so we should do injustice to the young people of today if we judged them by these shallow performances and conventionalities. For the opening of eyes and the enlargement of horizons is as marked a fact as the other. The new freedom assumed by the youth of today, the increase in spending money, the widened range of activities made possible by machinery, and the multiplication of attractive objects or experiences that can be had for a money consideration—all these, taken together, stimulate thought as well as instinct. They present alternatives, awaken conflicting motives, make uncertainties vivid; all of which is favorable to reflection. It is probable that even "jazzy" young people are doing more thinking upon life's alternatives than was done by the average youths of yesterday. Many who appear to be blown hither or thither by popular

folly are really experimenting, watching, putting limits to their indulgences, endeavoring to be ethically realistic; all of which should be reassuring to those of us who are able to trust the human mind when it is awake and at work.

Furthermore, from a minority of youths, very modern youths, there flash forth upon our distraught world some of the most hopeful signs. I refer not so much to the impulsive idealism of some, so strongly contrasting with the frivolity of others, as to the union of critical thinking with sober idealism that appears in spots all over the world. Let the conventional self-flattery of maturity take heed to itself, for "a chiel's amang ye, takin' notes" upon our efficiencies and inefficiencies. The most effective critics of modern life are not Sinclair Lewis and H. L. Mencken, but younger spirits who possess both a scientific attitude of inquiry and an idealism that is not tired or sour. In the colleges such youngsters are engaged not only in "de-bunking" the customs of both faculties and students but also in thinking out something better.

To the credit of the older generation be it here recorded that various presidents and faculties are welcoming this critical scrutiny by much younger heads. Before me, for example, lies an official college bulletin that consists of a report by a student committee upon the curriculum, the teaching, and other official affairs of the institution. Similarly, there is a stirring in the churches. Young people are holding conventions in which they ask such questions and propose such measures as have not proceeded from youth at any time within the memory of men now living, if ever. And again it is remarkable to see how much of their freshness is welcomed by the older generation.

There is danger, indeed, that the hospitality of adult minds will divert these younger minds from their journey of exploration. Palliatives will be sought for in situations that require a drastic study of causes. Cooperation in a respectable good will postpone appraisement of the limitations of it. The lack of experience on the part of thinking young people, together with their sense of being at official disadvantage as compared with their elders, makes them too thankful for half-loaves where whole loaves are needed.

Youth's rashness, and the perils that it involves, require closer analysis than they ordinarily receive. The fault of the great majority is precipitate acceptance of adult standards and ways of life. This is youth's most characteristic rashness. Here is a young workingman who says that the "powers that be" are so strongly intrenched in the state and in industry that his vote can make no difference; hence, he pursues a policy of merely wriggling within his immediate environment so as to get out of it what he can. Here is a high-school senior who declares outright that the professed standards of adults do not represent the forces whereby things get done; money and power *are* the things that count; the strong *do* exploit the weak; this *is* the road to success, and he intends to walk in it. Here are multitudes of young men and young women who are so rash as to accept the class-consciousness of their parents as though it were self-evidently correct. And here are myriads of members of church young-people's societies who actually regard the conventional religion about them as a fulfilment of Jesus' double law of love. The great and deadly rashness of youth takes the form of hasty acquiescence in things as they are or seem to be.

Of those who do not acquiesce, by far the larger number will be found in the following classes: Those who make an idealistic spurt, but grow tired, or become discouraged because of the inertness or the antagonism of others; those who talk but do not act; those who act but are too thankful for "small favors," too gratified by minor improvements, to do anything really fundamental; and those who, seeing this lag in things fundamental, "give it up." All these become swallowed up, in the end, by the insatiable respectability of the *status quo*.

Radicalism, whether that of the mere skeptic, or that which discards the good for the better and the better for the best, is not characteristic of the young. There is only a small minority of thinking youths who make any sustained effort to go to the bottom of things. Of these there are three main types: The attackers, the appliers, and the investigators.

The attackers turn life inside out in order to show how irrational or futile the accepted order of things is. The working hypothesis appears to be that whatever enjoys official power or general acceptance is either misled or misleading. The results are, of course, one sided, but they are not useless. Until our institutions provide for self-criticism, they are bound to be victims of self-deception; therefore they must be "shown up" again and again. Probably attack is good, in the end, even for our valid convictions, because they get tangled with what is temporary and merely specious. It is true, of course, that these young attackers are, to a considerable extent, imitators of the mature writers, mentioned in an earlier section, who exploit our irrationality as a literary gold mine. There is, therefore, a touch of conventionality and dependence in these would-be emanci-

pated youngsters. They should be listened to, however, because they are on track of aspects of truth that are commonly overlooked.

The appliers are those who endeavor to go the whole length with some approved principle, as, for example, Jesus' injunction to treat all men as brothers. This sort of endeavor, in turn, leads to a critique of life not less drastic than that of the attackers, but more likely to be patient and considerate towards our weaknesses. Moreover, the appliers exhibit various attempts to govern their present conduct by exalted standards for which the society about them is not ready. The service of such youths is various. It reveals to us the disparity between the pious phrases of our lips and our daily conduct in church, state, and occupation. It presents many a living example of fidelity to an ideal. It spreads the contagion of faith, making better things practicable because we believe that they are so.

The third, or investigator, type of non-conventional youth goes behind the appearance of things by intellectual processes that sometimes have all the coolness of science. He must be "shown"; neither *ipse dixit* nor general acquiescence satisfies him. What does the curriculum of this college include and what does it omit, and why? What are the most effective methods of teaching, and do our professors use them? What are the real values of our extra-curricular activities? How are our teachers chosen and promoted, and how much are they paid? Why do we have religious denominations, creeds, missions, worship? What is the truth about our international relations? What is the life of the industrial worker like? How is "hiring and firing" done? I'll get a job and find out. What really is happening in Germany or Russia?

Why shouldn't I go over there to see for myself? This sort of questioning is growing, and it is bound to spread in colleges and high schools. It is one of the most solidly hope-giving aspects of the entire youth situation.

These three types of aggressive non-conformity overlap and blend, of course. As a rule students of the investigator type are moved by dissatisfaction with the *status quo;* they investigate in order to find the road towards some ideal. Not seldom the applier type discovers the fascination of social statistics and even of history. The attacker, in turn, will usually be found working for specific reforms. All three types make freedom their common cause—freedom to think without fear of consequences; freedom to speak with sincerity upon great issues; freedom to listen to speakers who represent disagreeable minority positions; freedom to participate in the determination of the conditions under which they shall live.

In these youths who really transcend conventions we have a hint of what might be, what ought to be, the normal place of young people in society. Yes—let me answer your doubt before you state it—there is danger that, taking advantage of the questioning mood, the dissenting mood, or the consciousness of freedom, wayward impulse will make the worse appear the better reason. There is danger in asking questions, but God took this risk when he created man; and by far the greater danger is that we shall not ask questions enough, nor questions that go deep enough. By far the greatest evil in the youth-life of today is that so few young men and women find any antidote to the way men imitate themselves and one another—any antidote, that is to say, to the pseudo-wisdom of age.

PART IV

HOW CAN THEY BE RELEASED?

XXVI

THE INESCAPABLE TASK

Capacity for high motivation, but doubt of the existence of such capacity because our performance is low; low performance due, not chiefly to external obstacles nor to remains of the beast in us, but to self-imposed bondage to our past and present selves, the instrument that binds us being that which is high, not low, in us, even our intelligence and reason—this is what we behold. The same intelligence that masters external circumstance by looking behind and before, by the same process subjects us to ourselves. On the other hand, intelligence chafes at the bondage that it has created, and knows itself as the agent of emancipation.

Such is our self-imprisoning, self-releasing, deeply paradoxical human nature. But there is a difference. We imprison ourselves automatically, but we do not automatically release ourselves. The door closes with a spring lock; it opens only by directed effort. At least, adherence to the *status quo* requires as a rule little reflection, while release from it into something better requires much. In particular, the *habit* of releasing myself from what I am and have been depends upon continuous alertness joined with self-detachment or objectivity with respect to myself.

Our greatest lack is a habit of self-release, a habit of being free and freely cooperative. Such a habit cannot be acquired by repetition of impulsive revolts

or impulsive repentances, nor by jumping at novelties; it requires self-discipline; it depends upon practising a technic.

But a technic for freedom in the sphere of life's values and policies can scarcely be said to exist. Scientific method is indeed the technic of free intelligence conceived as a disinterested observer of events; but something more than on-looking is involved in living. Our difficulty lies in inadequate procedures in the weighing of values and the choice of ends. Here, too, scientific method—as we shall presently see in more detail—is essential to freedom; we are not too enamored of science nor too ready to use its technic, but not enough so. Yet scientific method is only one factor in the technic of self-release. In the absence of the other factors, it becomes, in fact, a servant of inferior, reactionary, or even destructive ways of life, as we abundantly see at the present moment.

The inescapable task for our culture—for education, religion, social organization, and (I surmise) literature and the other arts—is to develop a technic for freedom in the sense of continuous release from continuously-forming precedents—release into selves that are neither precedent-ridden nor yet fidgety or flighty but creative.

This implies much more than readiness to participate in reform movements. Excitement over the dust and rubbish that have accumulated, or even willingness to clean Augean stables, does not get at causes; it deals only with the products of self-poisoning processes, not with the sources of the poison; it produces little beyond oscillation between the fulness of a vice and the emptiness of a virtue.

Even the religion that glories in its ascription of

infinite value to persons has failed to develop a technic for releasing personality from its self-imposed limitations. Indeed, the maintenance of some of these limitations in the form of beliefs, institutions, and rules of conduct has been erected into a virtue.

Meantime, religion conducts a largely futile struggle against the bondage of sin. The churches pray, exhort, instruct, but all this is effective, for the most part, only with sins that already lack social standing. Current religion knows not how to deal with the deep depravity of our respectable faults, and indeed it scarcely recognizes them as faults. On the other hand, it magnifies petty virtues and a-dynamic goodness. It offers emotional elevation and a sense of selfhood through worship, but since God is rarely worshipped as a creative power here and now at work within the moral order, the worshipper's self remains complacent and accommodating, an arrived and secure soul; it does not become a chrysalis breaking from its shell. Any adequate religion will call for a different way of paying respect to the Creator, and a different way of receiving him into our lives. Worship must come to include within itself a technic for continually transcending the religious self and the religious organization of yesterday and of today, a technic for free reconstruction within the whole realm of our deepest hopes, our highest ideals, our ultimate convictions, and our profoundest fellowships and loyalties.

Considerable liberty in the sense of toleration of dissent already exists, it is true, in large areas of Protestantism, but this is not the same as a technic for freedom. When we merely tolerate dissent, we the tolerators do not dissolve the special privilege claimed by our past and present selves; our own

souls remain indoors, and we decline the responsibility for exploration and the changing of our maps.

What of the schools, then? Surely they are emancipators of personality? Yes and no. Education, as we moderns of the West practise it, contains the most remarkable ambiguity. For it sincerely intends to develop the specifically human capacity for intelligent self-control, but with equal sincerity it intends to keep the teacher (that is, the generation that is passing away) in control of the pupil (the generation that is arriving).

We justify this dualism, or at least keep it alive and respectable-looking, by the violent assumption that we who are about to die already possess wisdom, already know how to live, already incarnate pure intelligence to such a degree that the next generation cannot do better than walk in our footsteps. "Acquire self-control," we say to the young, but we mean, "Form a habit of doing what we oldsters want you to do." This reminds one of the old skit on the doctrine of predestination:

> You can and you can't; you will, and you wont;
> You'll be damned if you do, you'll be damned if you don't.

Or, still better, it illustrates Paul's famous confession: "There is war in my members. . . . The good that I would do, I do not, and the evil that I would not do, that I do." What we should do is to make our educational system a systematic warning against walking in our footsteps.

The whole conception of education as primarily a process of handing on the intelligence that we possess is an error. For intelligence is not a deposit that one can possess; it is not composed of particular mental acts and habits; endeavor to possess it, and

you gather to yourself ashes and smoking embers—the flame has escaped you.

Under the surface of contemporary education these two irreconcilables are already in conflict. We are beginning to see that the prime function of schools is to put the young into possession of methods for inquiry and for testing. And in the light of this function we are beginning to ask, What is it to teach patriotism, or religious loyalty, or social-mindedness? The result is conflict that goes deeper than a contest between two finished views of the state or of the church or of social organization. It is a contest between two opposed ways of acquiring and holding views, opposed ways of dealing with standards, of handling ever-rising new issues, of choosing our loyalties.

The effect of making education an instrument whereby the wisdom of a departing generation shall control the arriving one never is what the theory of it calls for. Theoretically, the impartially selected best in contemporary civilization should be transmitted; actually some sort of partizanship is propagated. A state school in Canada and one in the United States, though they be within sight of each other, do not develop a common rationality in respect to either of the two countries or in respect to Great Britain. The teaching of what is called patriotism is the inculcation of partizanship and of the closed mind. There is nothing in it that enables pupils to discriminate between different varieties of patriotism, or that prepares them for a possibly unprecedented type.

Religious education in the church school, likewise, is partizan. It is directed towards the perpetuation of a specific loyalty, not towards the capacity and

the habit of weighing loyalties. Even if Christians already have the truth, this does not justify partizan methods in teaching it; for the truth, one would guess, requires no special privilege. Indeed, it is worth asking whether partizanship on behalf of a good thing does not always obscure its goodness. Would it be un-Christian so to teach the young that they should freshly and freely weigh Christianity and its alternatives, my denomination and other denominations, our civilization and other actual or possible ones?

Because we do not thus educate we have churches that have no technic for correcting their corporate errors, no technic for squarely meeting new situations, no technic for getting denominations together even when these denominations know that they ought to do it. Moreover, no just balance is held between majorities and minorities in the churches, or between laymen and clergy or clerical officers.

Whether the need for conversion is greater in church education or in state education might be questioned; in any case the spiritual sickness of both is the same, and the remedy is the same. Both display a self-imprisonment of the spirit, though both aspire to freedom; both take steps towards freedom, but hesitate, fear, and compromise or become inefficient from both points of view. In this juncture our inescapable duty is to go forward, not into discrete freedoms doled out piecemeal, but into freedom as an all-inclusive technic and habit whereby we shall continuously outgrow ourselves both individually and collectively.

Some parts of such a technic are now in process of experimental development. We shall in due time point them out. Other parts we have still to seek.

The assumption under which the seeking must proceed is that the technic of freedom is not a pattern that we impose upon conduct, but itself a manifestation of freedom, and therefore something more like friendship or worship.

XXVII

THE FUNCTION OF MINORITIES

To say "freedom" is to be reminded of the old, old story of the struggle of apparent weakness against obvious power; the desperate straits of a truth against which men stop their ears; the plight of the simply human as against the institutional; the contrast between injustice in obscure corners and massive but inert virtue in the market-place.

Freedom connotes minorities. There is no instance of a majority that, having become secure in its power, spontaneously secretes freedom from within itself for any considerable time. It appears to be about as easy for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle as for those who have power over men to cultivate freedom in the same men. Even under constitutions that guarantee individual liberty, actual liberty exists, if at all, through continuous struggle of a dissatisfied few against the lethargy of a satisfied many. The only exceptions that I can think of are the few teachers and parents who, imbued with respect for the personalities of the young, endeavor to educate them through their freedom instead of by canalizing their minds.

Our reliance must be, then, not upon might and power, but upon the kind of spiritual strength that can reside in those who are accounted weak. Let us consider, then, the function of minorities, and the more effective methods of performing this function.

This subject is strangely neglected, and when not neglected, strangely misunderstood. It is a truism of history that the privileges that we enjoy simply because we are men were won for us from reluctant power first of all through the daring dreams, and then the daring struggle, of a few. We glory in these early minorities, or minor forces as the world measures force, yet for the most part our present citizens regard it as a misfortune to be in a minority, especially if it is small and its triumph seems far away. Pity or contempt towards those who are "different" is the conventional thing among us, but when have success and power, however unjust, been contemptible?

Up to the present time we in America have almost entirely failed to develop and utilize the capacities of political minorities. The popular assumption is that the function of a minority party is to win the next election, and then to rule as the majority party. If the election goes against us, we think that the next thing to do is to expire or to make terms with the dominant majority, as Mr. Roosevelt did after a single defeat of the Progressive Party, and as Democratic leaders have done for many years when their party has been out of power. The assumed principle is, Win the election, or else give up, or compromise and divide the benefits.

But this leaves out of account one of the chief services that a minority might perform, especially a minority that maintains a continuous existence through a long period of defeats. This service is nothing less than helping the majority party to use its power more wisely than it is capable of using it without outside help. To make the party in power think twice before acting; to make it aware that all

that is hidden will be brought to light; to make it conscious that nothing is settled until it is settled right; and to keep alive the idea that the last and the least of our citizens must be taken into account—this is a service that the majority cannot perform for itself, and that neither a short-lived nor compromising minority can perform, but only a minority whose convictions are deep enough to sustain it indefinitely.

Whatever party or individual is in power, real grievances exist; somebody is oppressed, or exploited, or thwarted in his legitimate claims. It is the function of the minority to listen to his cry and to become voice for him in the centers of administration and legislation. It is likewise the function of the minority to keep its thinking "ahead of the game" and to initiate ideas that require to be mulled over before action is taken. When a vital idea is apprehended it is to be talked about, and thought through, and revised, and kept before people's minds until it has the effect that is its due.

I have spoken as if the tools of a political minority were weapons, and as if strife were of the essence of the technic that freedom requires. But herein I have merely used existing notions of politics in order to point the way to something better. That strife is not the process whereby minorities can best perform most of their functions will be shown in a subsequent section. At the present moment what most concerns us is to perceive that minorities are a normal part of any live society, political or other; to ascertain the needs that only minorities can meet, and in the light of what we thus find to set forth some items in a rational policy for individual conduct.

First of all, we need to give more attention than is customary to the effects of power upon those who

wield it, and we need to educate the young with direct reference to these effects. The reason for continuous universal education with respect to this matter is the all-pervasiveness of the problem and of the difficulty. We have to deal not only with power lodged in officers of state, but also in parents, employers, labor leaders, investors, clergymen and ecclesiastical officers, and leaders in many civic groups; not only with power lodged in adults but also the power of the young over one another in play and social relations; finally, we have to do not merely with the conduct of leaders, but also with that of members of majorities or of other dominant groups. Education on this point is needed not only in order to put those who wield power upon guard against themselves, but also to make the generality of men reasonably critical towards their leaders, and towards all dominant parties or groups. In short, the whole populace should acquire a habit of sensitiveness towards all power and authority wheresoever it is lodged.

Let us see, now, what the dangers are. They have their center in the fact that consciousness of possessing power tends to divert the possessor's attention from main issues to subordinate ones. The experience of being a cause, and of being able to bring things to pass, is enjoyable; therefore it seeks to prolong itself as though it were a good *per se,* whereas it is really good only when its consequences, on the whole, are wholesome. Thus the stake that one properly has in one's selfhood becomes exaggerated and distorted. This produces in the victim at one time undue respect for precedents that he himself has created, at other times undue responsiveness to the seductions of the moment. The resulting pseudo-

virtue of consistency, and the obverse pseudo-virtue of "adaptability" or "practicality" alike put one's present self into the foreground instead of the issues that the self should be meeting.

Instead of "one's self" in this description, we may read, upon occasion, "one's party," "one's church," "one's set," or "one's institution"; the truth of the description is unaffected. In short, consciousness of power tends to beget self-will in individuals and in groups.

Not only does this self-will tend to dislocate issues *ab initio*; it also cumulatively surrounds itself with products of its own that wall it off from surrounding realities. One now uses "vested interests" as the measure of other interests; one measures one's efficiency by the ratio between planned result and actual result, not realizing that the lack of a better plan, a wider horizon, spells inefficiency; one consorts with persons of like mind, whether partners or beneficiaries, erects their joint opinion into an orthodoxy, and becomes callous towards outsiders and towards unaccustomed ideas; at last the fate that was implicit in the situation from the beginning fulfils its measure—incapacity to reconstruct from within, and ignoble terror before the danger of explosion from without.

It is scarcely needful to dwell upon the less subtle consequences of possessing power, such as exaggeration of the importance of security for oneself and one's possessions; secretiveness; the temptation to employ illegitimate means and to justify them by the importance of the ends in view, and the danger, at last, of conscienceless corruption.

Let no one think that this is a description merely of political parties, cliques, office-holders, and bosses, nor that the economic sphere is the only one that

needs to be considered along with the political. No; the psychology of the matter applies to the whole experience of wielding power. Many years ago a woman became, as she thought, disillusioned concerning a leader who was widely known for his utterly unselfish devotion to the common weal. "For," said she, "I have learned that in his family he is dictatorial to the point of tyranny, whereas outside his family he teaches and practises the exact opposite." It was my privilege to point out that there is here no psychological inconsistency. "He was born into a social system that took for granted that a husband and father would be the 'head of the family,' and as such would make decisions for the whole family, and employ the family means to carry his decisions through. From this root his domestic habits grew as grows the grass. On the other hand, outside the family he encountered a contrary set of assumptions, and he developed a contrasting set of habits. These habits truly reveal his capacity for sensitive response to persons; if he were to start his family experience *de novo* under the assumptions of the new day, with no consciousness of the old-fashioned power as 'head of the family,' he would form domestic habits that would satisfy you."

Knowledge of the psychology of power is needed in our religious organizations. For here additional emotional sanctions gather around the conduct of clerical leaders, and around institutional acts, past and present. The religiousness of both leader and led reinforces the tendencies that have been described, and then partly overlooks, partly hushes up, partly defends, and partly sanctifies the results.

One great communion, the Roman Catholic, not only concentrates all power in a hierarchy, but also

identifies the authority of the hierarchy with the authority of an unchanging God. Theoretically it does not follow that all priestly acts and policies are sound, for distinction is made between the bishop or the Pope acting as an individual and the same person wielding divine authority. Nevertheless in practice this distinction tends to fade out. What the Pope says "goes" without anybody's stopping to inquire whether or not it is *ex cathedra.* If the bishops in the United States adopt a policy—concerning parochial schools, say—that they have a perfect right to reject or to reconsider, opposition to it is instantly branded as disloyalty to the church. A bishop has been known to go as far as to assert that it is improper to discuss and evaluate episcopal conduct except in official conclaves. In this situation the moral necessity of institutional self-criticism is unprovided for. Minorities can scarcely function at all. Even when oppressive use of power is made by an occasional ecclesiastic, there is no known way to resist it without being accused of straight disloyalty to Mother Church; and when a high official becomes prideful, puffed up, and notorious for pompous display, no way is at hand for deflating him.

Protestant bodies, though they offer far more opportunity for reconstruction from within, even providing organs for lay participation therein, nevertheless do not escape the tendencies that accompany the exercise of power, nor provide adequate means for resisting these tendencies. The immunities of officialdom, though they be not denominated in the bond, are there. "Respect for the cloth" leads to the coddling of theological students; by means of easy tests it certifies intellectual weakness along with

strength, and then piously puts up with the resulting qualities of pulpit and pastoral skill.

For how many of the sermons preached last Sunday was there any real occasion? Where real occasion for a sermon existed, was the needed and serviceable sermon forthcoming? What is an efficient or successful minister? The point of this question is not that ministers are human, fallible, and of varying degrees of ability, but that the immunity from real tests that their official position gives them misleads both them and their parishioners. Keeping the church machinery going and attracting support for it, or even increasing the membership, does not of itself indicate anything as to what is happening within the spiritual life. Here, as in politics, industry, and education, the possession of power generates illusions.

A striking example of this illusory self-involution is the continuance of denominational competition in rural communities after the facts and the wickedness of it have been exposed. Denominational officers responsible for this condition have become so far ankylosed by the poison of officialdom that they take only the feeblest steps towards reform, and meantime the laity, though it does not believe in this competition, contributes the money for keeping it going.

Nothing will effectively counteract these tendencies except a further development within Protestantism of the functions of minorities. Among other things, we need a more critical church press and also more periodicals devoted to religion but entirely independent of official support. We must ask more questions, and questions with a sharper point. We must not hesitate to bring about losses of some kinds of power in order that spiritual powers of better quality may be released. Genial humor and good-

natured satire might well be employed as one antidote to the sense of personal enlargement that so commonly attends elevation to office. If we Protestants gasp at the effect upon Catholic "dignitaries" of the authority that they wield, we should at least snicker out loud at the effect upon our own bishops.

Active, unabashed, good-natured minorities are needed wherever our life is organized, and indeed wherever, organized or not, we move in masses. We owe a debt to anybody who employs unfashionable good taste. There is room for coteries of persons bent upon reaching out beyond the conventional to the beautiful and the true. We need minorities in morals, too; minorities that will openly place the weak points over against the strong points in current moral standards as well as practice, and that will also pay the cost of experiments in living upon a higher plane. We cannot have moral evolution without in some way abandoning old standards and adopting new ones. If this abandoning and adopting is desultory, hit-and-miss, and especially if it is compelled to be secret, evolution becomes unduly slow and costly, or else unduly fast and costly. The rational procedure is to recognize that there is a place for minorities that seriously experiment with reconstructions for the benefit of all. The widespread moral confusion and haste of the present day is a natural result of the lack of critical minorities thinking and experimenting in the open during the preceding two or three generations when the conditions of existence were being rapidly transformd by economic forces.

From some of the current concepts of education one would infer that in the school and college world at least minorities must be flourishingly performing

their indispensable functions. One would expect students to obtain a material part of their training in rationality from belonging to this or that minority, and from the reciprocal modification of majorities and minorities by each other. Some experience of this kind is had, in fact, in self-government schemes of some sorts; yet it appears that the educational possibilities of majority-minority situations are rarely worked out either by pupils acting alone or by pupils acting under the guidance of supervisors. Instead of the learning of deficiencies and the enlargement of horizon that should result from the interplay of groups, we find, too often, cock-crowing by the victorious majority and a sense of futility upon the part of the defeated minority.

This in the elementary and secondary schools. When we come to the colleges, we find conditions even worse. The majority-minority relations are so irrational that anything more ominous for the future of society can scarcely be found. "Campus customs," often trivial, sometimes offensive, are enforced upon every last student with the ruthlessness of a Czarist régime. If one refuses, say, to wear a green cap, one is thrown into water or otherwise manhandled; or, if physical penalties have been abolished, there are psychical penalties not less compelling. The faculty of a certain college is proud to have rooted physical violence completely out of the campus; yet on the same campus there is a law that a freshman must deliver a match to any upper-class man who demands one, and another law permits any upper-class man to examine the socks that any freshman is wearing. "What would happen to a freshman who refused to submit to these laws?" a visitor asked. The reply was that if he persisted in his disobedience life would be

made so miserable for him that he would leave college. The visitor asked again, "What would happen if a freshman sent to the college paper a dignified communication in opposition to these customs?" The editor answered that the communication would not be printed, but that if it were printed the writer would suffer the penalty.

The quality of such campus laws must be judged by the effects upon both those who command and those who obey. The pain, physical or mental, even though it amount to cruelty, is not the worst of the matter, by any means. A deeper wound by far is inflicted upon the perpetrators themselves through the closing of their minds to thought and to the conditions of rational social existence. Where minorities have no voice, the mind of the majority decays. Perhaps the clearest sign of what really happens here is the sheepish submissiveness of the minority, and the salving of its sores by the thought that next year one will have the privilege of tormenting somebody else.

"All the general student offices for the next three years have been allotted. Even the freshmen who are to hold office in their senior year have been picked out," said one who knew. "How was it done?" "Oh, politicians from the fraternities put their heads together and distributed the plums." "But how about the elections? Can these politicians deliver the vote?" "Certainly."

This may be an extreme case, but certainly "delivering the votes" is common upon our campuses, and partizanship is taken as normal. Majority-minority relations are made up of deals, combinations, sharp practices, squabbles, and occasional corruption of the ballot. The minutes of a certain

chapter of a fraternity actually contain the record of a motion, duly made and carried, that the chapter combine with other fraternities therein named to get and divide the college offices.

When we find such things in Pennsylvania colleges, or Ohio colleges, or Illinois colleges, we are justified in asking whether academic experience may not be contributing to the gang politics and the political corruption proved to have been present in these states. Though the means for proving a connection are lacking, the likelihood of it is sufficient to give pause to the wise. At least this can be asserted, that this sort of college experience contains no corrective for this sort of political conduct.

One looks in vain for anything in the teaching or the administration of colleges that promises to go far in the opposite direction. Professors, who might be expected to be wise in such rudimentary matters of the education of intelligence, are handicapped by lack of reasonable minority-majority relations within their faculty. College administration is in too many respects autocratic; a professor has too much reason to suppose that minorities are unwelcome and futile. The contacts of students with such mentors, whether in the classroom or outside it, will not go far towards curing the ills of the campus.

Nor will the cure come, as far as now appears, from presidents and deans. The "administrative mind," admirable as it is for its ability to fit human and other factors together in a general scheme, is the victim of its own strength. It thinks of human problems in terms of possible manipulation by a manager; it seeks quick results, and it is tempted to value them above fine human relations; it fits men into its own plan instead of developing in men a

capacity to make plans. Prediction is, of course, precarious, but the present indications are that our best reliance for reform in this part of higher education is upon the students themselves. Their power, measured in administrative scales, is minor, but they are capable of attaining the spirit that overtops all mechanics of administration. We know this because of what we already see in individuals and minority groups upon many campuses. Students are beginning to ask to be educated! And much of the best criticism of the mass-folly of collegians comes from collegians themselves. The growth of these minorities in number, in size, in insight, and in articulateness is to be expected. There is room for hope that some day minorities upon the campus will perform their true educational function.

The indispensable functions of minorities, then, are these: To bring into the open any oppression, injustice, untruth, failure or defect that the powers that be are committing or permitting or failing to perceive; to apprehend and to define new issues, especially in situations in which the majority has a strong motive for continuing the *status quo;* to bring it to pass that ideas shall be thrashed out before action is taken; to protect the ruling majority from becoming the victim of its own power; finally, being convinced where truth and right lie, to stick to the conviction through thick and thin without compromise unless right reason shows that the conviction is erroneous. Let any minority that pursues this policy become the majority if it can; let it secure control if it can by fair and open means, and then let it beware of its own power, and let it accept help from minorities that now will arise in their turn.

The most important changes that are to occur to-

morrow are in the keeping of some minority now in existence or soon to arise. The most creative thought will take its rise from discontent and criticism, not from fattened respectability. The most significant part of society in state, in church, in the industrial order, in education, is some minority. Minorities can be wise or foolish. It is not necessarily creditable to walk with the few nor discreditable to march with the many (but only dangerous!). Nevertheless, the most significant part of any society is some minority in which creative changes are germinating. Without minorities society, as an order of reason, would perish.

XXVIII

RELEASE THROUGH COOPERATIVE THINKING

That release from the trammels of selfhood is to be found in some sort of self-identification with other selves is one of the surest insights men have achieved through millennial ponderings upon the meaning of life. But the nature and the process of this mingling of personalities have been variously conceived. Sympathy, particularly with sufferers; oneness with a congregation of worshippers; obedience, as of soldiers to a commander; fellowship through common loyalty to a person, a cause, or an institution; friendship and affection; "letting go" in a crowd, as in religious frenzies ancient and modern, in drinking bouts, or in a football game—all these have recommended themselves as modes of emancipation. All of them do in fact bring a sense of enlargement; we are here on track of some conceivably universal good. Yet the contrasts and the clashes between these heterogeneous modes of self-enlargement warn us to think twice. When we do think twice, we shall ask from what we need to be released, and into what, and what is the final result of each of these types of experience.

As a rule, we struggle to be released without first inquiring into the nature of our bondage, and as a result we hail as salvation almost any experience that promotes the flow of self-forgetting emotion. Real release, in any large and permanent sense, must be that which brings to fruition the motive that is in all

and through all our motivation—to be a rational, self-guiding self in a society of such selves; and the chains that must be struck off are the specific ones that we ourselves have forged through partial and defective self-activity in the past.

I shall take for granted, without devoting a section to discussing the point, that current thought is right, along with considerable ancient thought, when it values friendship, affection, and generally sympathetic relations between individuals as, in some degree, the actual attainment of the life of reason. The same is true of the experience of beauty, of delight in truth, and of play. All these are genuinely emancipating experiences. They are a rational good in themselves, and they fit into the framework of rationality in the larger relations. It is in these larger relations that our problem is, in practice, farthest from solution. In the modern world the individual is obliged to make specific reactions to extensive social masses and forces; further, many of these reactions must be made by the individual as a member of some class, organization, or institution. Here is where the shoe of precedent pinches most; here is where the capacity of the individual to achieve any large freedom is most in question.

It is perhaps scarcely necessary to argue that dividing the world of persons into a few who command and a many who obey is neither practicable nor inherently rational. The impossibility of it and the irrationality rest back upon the same fact, namely, that both those who command and those who obey know themselves and one another as persons. There is something present all 'round that is stronger than force. A full measure of obedience never can be exacted from the many, and the few cannot bring them-

selves to exact it. It is fascinating to witness the possessors of power compromising with themselves in the use of it; it is inspiring to see strength of spirit in those who are shorn of power. Persons just have to get together upon the sheer basis of personality.

There is a kind of freedom, as also a kind of get-together, in herd-action, no doubt. For such action takes down the bars and lets something inside of us caper. This capering may be lightsome, as in a New Orleans Mardi Gras or a New York City election-night jamboree; or it may be strenuous, as in mass support of a football team engaged in a hard game; or it may be destructive, as in an angry mob. By emotional release of this sort people can be made to cohere on behalf of an institution, a party, or a cause. Consequently leaders of many interests—political, economic, religious—have developed a technic for causing people to move in herds when, because of emotional release, they think they are acting freely as individuals.

It is not to be denied that release of this general type, though it be partial, though it lends itself to self-deception, though it be dangerous, may be serviceable at times. Leastways, one can scarcely fail to sympathize when minds long subjected to a narrow and numbing routine break loose and go on a spiritual picnic! There are times when frolicsome nonsense brings benefits deeper than the momentary satisfaction. We must not forget that even our better and wiser selves perpetually rebreathe the partly exhausted air that issues from our own lungs. We ever need the open! Further, when alternatives have been weighed and a decision reached, it may sometimes be the part of wisdom, though it be dan-

gerous, to put all our energy into an executive act, postponing further thought for the time being.

But mass-action in which critical thought is not a concurrent item never is wholly safe. It is least dangerous in play-activities in which the many actually play, not merely look on; it is most perilous when a whole population, or a class in society, or a party, acts as a unit under the inspiration of some high sentiment, religious, patriotic, or other. For now concentration of mind upon a given end that stirs deep emotion not merely postpones thought, but controls thought. The mind is now ready to affirm or deny anything whatever in the interest of its consuming passion; or, if 'interest' rather than 'passion' is the type of control, unlimited ingenuity is employed in digging out evidence that we are already acting wisely and fairly.

At this point the problem of release of our powers takes this form: How are the functions of thought to be performed and made effective where men act in groups, societies, classes, and masses? A special phase of this problem concerns the method of rational action where conflict arises or is threatened between two sets of persons.

A phrase that has been coming into use recently, "cooperative thinking" points the way to a solution, the only possible solution, of this problem. There are two aspects of it. One is "thinking" in the strict sense of active inquiry by analytic methods; the other is "cooperation" as contrasted, on the one hand, with thinking in solitude, and on the other hand, with the strife-and-victory attitude and habit.

Such thinking is, of course, not an invention, nor a new discovery. It exists in circles of friends who muse by the fireside without desire to win victories

over one another; it exists in some families and partnerships, in which the members pool their views and thereby attain harmony of action; it characterizes the old Quaker type of deliberation in which there was much silence and listening, but freedom to speak, with the final word of the chairman (no vote having been taken), "It seems to be the sense of the meeting that . . ."; it can be witnessed in assemblies in the interest of scientific research, when each participant in discussion takes the attitude of inquiry.

What has to be done with this already old experience of thinking together is threefold: To extend the practice from these restricted groups to other groups and to the larger aggregations of men; to extend it from the few interests in which it is now recognized to all interests that call for corporate action; and to dig deeper into the nature and the conditions of cooperative thinking, particularly in areas of conflict, and to improve the technic of it.

In view of some items of recent history, some readers may ask, "Do you mean discussion method, so called? If so, then, . . .?" If by discussion method we are to understand a particular *a*, *b*, *c*, procedure, this is not what I mean, for I am not convinced that cooperative thinking is restricted to any one, or any other number, of particular procedures. Even in the few examples to which allusion has been made there is great variety. On the other hand, there is distinct advantage in the formulation of specific procedures that have been successful—formulations that, most of all, enable persons assembling together for the first time to find their own mind and discern their problems most promptly.[1]

[1] See Harrison Elliott: *The Process of Group Thinking*, Association Press, 1928.

The leading promoters of discussion method, whatever the particular technic that they favor, appear to have in mind the same goal, on the whole, as that which I have defined. If the goal, and the roads that lead towards it, have not always been clearly seen, I am willing to think that this is incidental to the newness and the incompleteness of some phases of our experience in this field. Consequently, if I now point out some misconceptions and pitfalls, it is not because I wish to hold back the movement that goes under the name of discussion method, but because I believe that it represents in important measure a principle of rationality itself.

First, then, genuinely cooperative thinking must be something more than a friendly adjustment of conflicting present interests, or pooling of present desires. Let us gladly grant that arbitration, pooling, and adjustment by compromise have their place. When opponents—say, employers and employes—"get their feet under the same table," something is likely to be gained, even if conflicting desires are adjusted without inquiry into the validity of any of them. But in the end we must distinguish between the two questions, How can I get what I want with the least friction? and, What wants, of myself and of others, are reasonable?

An illustration of the principle is easily found in industrial conflicts. In most contests between capital and labor, each party occupies a fixed base of assumed self-interest. Now and then, it is true, a declaration is heard that the interest of the employer and the interest of the worker are at bottom one; but this is interpreted as meaning, according to one's starting point, either that high profits for the employer carry with them benefits for the worker in the way

of wages, or that high wages for the worker increase the prosperity of the investor by stabilizing labor and by enabling workers to buy goods. Meantime, evidence accumulates that something is wrong with the assumptions that underlie this type of thought. Are not the interests of capital and the interests of labor, as they are here understood, fundamentally antagonistic to each other and to the common weal? Clearly, the great task of thought and of conference between these two—rather three—interests is to face unflinchingly the true nature of the ends that each party seeks, and to evaluate them all by weighing them in the same scales.

A parallel instance is the habit of excluding from conferences between nations questions of "vital interest," "national honor," "purely domestic concern," or a specified topic such as the Monroe Doctrine. What is the implication of such reservations? Is it that we desire the privilege of acting arbitrarily? Or, is it that we possess a rationality that others do not possess? Or, finally, is it that we distrust thought as a guide where our emotions are most intense?

How is cooperative thinking related to debating? Undoubtedly debate, which proceeds by settled rules, is a splendid step on the road from squabbling to peace. The rules of order for deliberative assemblies are a mighty achievement of reason. They make mere force take a back seat. For they make it possible for the last man to be heard. They provide for pause, a second thought, amendment and postponement; they enable minorities actually to modify the thinking of majorities, and they are one instrument of a genuinely common will—a will proved to be common by the loyal acquiescence of minorities in

final decisions by vote. Nevertheless, debate is only a half-way house. For it is a clash between conclusions already held rather than a seeking for deeper insight. Moreover, because it has the form and uses a method of conflict, it is not favorable to friendly and candid examination of motives. It is not a method of self-criticism, nor of help to others in self-criticism.

Discussion method, even in its present forms, is a clear addition to the tools of reason. For it does not endeavor to make one's initial position prevail. Rather, its attitude is that of seeking to know rather than seeking to convince or to win. It is a method of mutual self-modification. It smooths the path towards the larger truths, which are always the potentially common-to-all rather than the particular-to-me. Its hardest task and its severest test will be found in the necessity, ultimately, of submitting to mutual scrutiny our basic assumptions, which represent our deepest-rooted and most persistent desires.

Cooperative revision of conduct in the realm of basic desires through analytical thought! Release from our self-bound selves by what one may dare call the intellectual love of one another! This is the goal towards which cooperative thought must move. In the end, nothing less will suffice.

We shall be tempted to content ourselves with a less radical good, a less radical rationality than this. We shall be tempted not only by timidity and desire for special privileges, but also by our regard for what is really good within one another. The evil in life is due chiefly to misplaced and displaced desires that are not fundamentally evil but fundamentally good. There is reason, always, for respect, considerateness, gentleness, therefore. Any attempt to think cooperatively must rely upon bringing the reason-

ableness of such attitudes to clear consciousness. But at once we are tempted, even out of regard for one another, to soften issues, or to pool interests rather than weigh our wants, or to equilibrate our present views instead of deepening our problem and obtaining fresh data.

There is no painless operation that can cure us of our deeper irrationalities. Discussion, when it is good, does not anesthetize its participants, nor make them dozy with the sweet food of specious solutions for problems, but keeps them awake by the prick of self-criticism. When discussion is at its best it treads the dangerous edge where intrenched interests and supposedly sacred convictions practice the philosophy of preparedness.

Sometimes cooperative thinking must manifest its virtues by producing repentance. For, though a kernel of good impulse can be found in our conduct, the direction that conduct takes often is destructive. I can administer spiritual poison to myself through my love of life; when I pursue my just rights I can become insensitive and cruel; I can become so absorbed in the mechanisms and immediate motives of my occupation that I fail of ethical perspective. For me, in such situations, there is no salvation into rationality without an about-face.

No method of conference will render minorities dispensable. In even the sincerest discussion we need participants who have the "show me" spirit. Always there is a residuum of problem or of evidence not yet mastered; always there is the one-sidedness of men; always there will be leaders who are in danger of dominating the thought of others; friendliness may produce an illusory sense of unanimity or of having solved a problem; and even while discussion is going

on conditions in the world are changing and problems are shifting. Discussion groups in which minorities fade out should be carefully scrutinized.

The promotion of discussion method has brought to the fore still another set of interesting and important questions. Are all questions whatsoever to be treated as open? However we answer this query, are we to set down as prejudiced every mind that tenaciously holds that condition *a* is right, condition *b* wrong, and change *c* required? Does cooperative thinking imply that such an individual is to act as if he did not see what he is sure that he does see? And does it justify in others an everlasting "Perhaps so; perhaps not"? Is nothing ever to be taken as settled? Does willingness to consider the other man's point of view estop us from action that may, from his point of view, constitute antagonism?

The rational answers to these questions appear to be as follows: The only sense in which we can properly assume that all questions are open is that everyone should be ready to weigh specific evidence when it is offered and to go after evidence upon specific proof that it is needed. The most learned man, and the ethically insightful one, can be at home in a discussion group upon this condition; he cannot be at home if the notion of open-mindedness is so applied as to make specific grounds and sharp distinctions seem unimportant. The open mind is not the same as the empty mind, as has been said; it is far more likely to be the full mind. That is, readiness to listen, to weigh, and to revise, rather than non-committance, is the essential requirement. Truly cooperative thinking will not make pussy-cats of us all; there still will be prophets, and they will express convictions that have point. They will be helped, however,

to be circumspect, even though, as seems to be inevitable, conduct will result that, from some points of view, constitutes antagonism.

Cooperative thinking thus understood offers a marvellous emancipation to us who are caught in the web of selfhood. An emancipation both negative and positive, both from something and into something. It offers, to begin with, as real a "letting go" as the emotional sprees that simulate freedom. When I enter wholeheartedly into discussion, as we are coming to understand this term, I rise out of my inhibitions, my strains, my defence-attitudes, my feeling that the weal or the woe of myself, my party, my institution, or society in general is hanging by a thread that I am holding between my fingers. What a relief! And what a smoothing out of the wrinkles of the mind ensues when one casts out pride of being right, and, instead of being embarrassed when one is found to be in error, rejoices in being set right. This is one phase of the becoming "as a little child" that Jesus recommended.

But this is a letting go, not into a controlling emotion, but into a more limber use of intelligence. The change is like that which a tennis player, or a piano player, experiences when he learns how to relax his wrist. Questions now bob up where they were not suspected; one sees hitherto unrealized meanings in the other fellow's thought; one's own notions now appear in a new perspective, and one actually understands one's own ideas better than before; the as-yet-unknown and the as-yet-unfinished come out of the shadows and show themselves for what they are, and therefore the lure of study increases. New possibilities now seem worth trying, and expectancy of unprecedented good is nourished.

Here are conditions that favor invention, originality, and creativeness. There is, first, release from tensions; then, vivid consciousness of a problem; next, stimulation by varied data and alternatives, and finally, criticism of all proposed solutions. No doubt the climax of creativity will occur as a rule in moments of solitary reflection, but this free fellowship of mind prepares the way. It starts the appropriate mood and attitude; it helps define our discontents; it gets us out of our ruts. Cooperative *thinking* does not flatten out the individual; rather, it saves him from the merely type-reactions of both himself and his professional and social environment.

A little way back we contemplated the pseudo-emancipation of herd action. Let us close this section by noticing the opposite pseudo-emancipation of smart minds that are not cooperative. We have had in recent years not a little free-lance criticism of everything in our civilization. With much of the "de-bunking" that has resulted, these pages have shown sympathy. But much of this criticism fails to attain complete objectivity because the critic takes no means to correct his own necessarily faulty personal equation. His personality, his theory of the universe, or his dominant mood so mingles with his description of actualities that the final effect is the pitting of a newly conventionalized individual against older conventions. This will be found in fiction, in essay, and in criticism. These authors feel, perhaps, that they are exercising great freedom, whereas in fact much of their capacity for apprehending fact, for critical judgment, and for reconstruction is bound by their solitariness or their partizanship. Full emancipation comes only through some form of cooperative thinking.

XXIX

MY INTRACTABLE SELF

The problem of releasing our powers is the problem of both mastering and submitting to the process of becoming a person. A submission that is also a mastering! Here is the paradox of rationality in a finite and growing being. A sort of dialectic is involved: Self-affirmation, followed by self-denial, and then realization that this denial of self is in reality a higher and fuller affirmation of selfhood.

I am not conscious, when I say this, of being under the influence of Hegel, and certainly I do not regard this process as abstractly logical. It is not the logical inconsistency of our self-assertiveness that is so troublesome, but the consequences of it in pain, injustice, sensuality, on the one hand, and on the other hand the numbing of high motives of which we are by nature capable.

This interplay of apparent opposites appears in the large in the majority-minority-majority cycle. Power in the majority gives rise from within itself to power-in-weakness in a minority; this after struggle grows into the major self-affirmation of the society in question, and then, in turn, a new minority is required.

A parallel cycle is fulfilled in the individual through the medium of cooperative thinking. Before the experience of cooperative thinking he affirms or believes or acts upon the basis of a narrow experi-

ence; cooperative thinking submits his case to a wider, more varied experience, in which he ceases to take himself as the majority; but behold, this submission frees and intensifies his own individuality, whereupon the cycle begins over again.

The point in this cycle at which the chief obstacles to the growth of persons are encountered is the second step—the denial of one's accumulated self. The chief hindrances are emotional. They are fear of the unknown, and reaching after utter security (which in fact one never experiences until one ceases to grasp after it); pride (which does one the dishonor of identifying oneself with one's possessions or products); sensitiveness to opposition or contradiction (which easily becomes either pugnacity, or argumentativeness, or smartness, or the habit of being on the defensive); and indolent contentment with the merely good, coupled with only languid approval of the better. In all these states the self withdraws from actuality, covering its eyes as if they could not bear the light. Consequently, a prime necessity, if we are to be released from bondage to self, is the attainment of objectivity, particularly objectivity towards our own sensitive points.

There are several trails that lead into or at least towards this fruitful mountain valley. The scientific study of man helps; learning what others think about us helps; a third trail, which is the least laborious and painful, is laughter. I mean the laughter, not of scorn or derision, but of humorous sympathy. Put yourself into some funny classification, even if it be only partly or remotely true, and lo, you are playing with yourself instead of making of your little self such a dreadfully serious matter! Humor in this sense—not the biting-dog sense—is a method of ob-

jectivity or truth-finding. It has a wondrous capacity to make small things look small, and large things large. "Just think, mother!" a humorous magazine makes a freshly graduated collegian say, as he holds up his "sheepskin," "Now I'm an educated man!"

Genial humor, moreover, is a normal expression of confidence in the meaningfulness of life. When I laugh good-humoredly at my own foibles I as much as say, "I wasn't all there, was I?" When Immanuel Kant, who was less than five feet tall, stumbled and fell, he rose smiling, saying that it was no matter, he wasn't tall enough to fall far! The meaning of comedy is that we look straight at the incongruities in ourselves without being abashed or losing our self-respect—*we* are free and happy in spite of our blunders, more free and happy because we do not dodge the fact of our blundering. The stage comedy that we enjoy most is the one that most completely hits off the characteristic foibles of humanity in the large, that is of us the spectators. Here we play with our selfhood, see deeper into it, and renew our confidence that we can be rational.

Man is like a bear in a cage, says Robert Frost—so different from a bear freely roaming, so ridiculous, yet . . . But see for yourself how humor without acerbity works.

THE BEAR

By Robert Frost

The bear puts both arms round the tree above her
And draws it down as if it were a lover
And its choke-cherries lips to kiss goodby,
Then lets it snap back upright in the sky.
Her next step rocks a boulder on the wall.
(She's making her cross-country in the fall.)
Her great weight creaks the barbed wire in the staples

As she flings over and off down through the maples,
Leaving on one wire tooth a lock of hair.
Such is the uncaged progress of the bear.
The world has room to make a bear feel free.
The universe seems cramped to you and me.
Man acts more like a poor bear in a cage
That all day fights a nervous inward rage,
His mood rejecting all his mind suggests.
He paces back and forth and never rests
The toe-nail click and shuffle of his feet,
The telescope at one end of his beat,
And at the other end the microscope,
Two instruments of nearly equal hope,
And in conjunction giving quite a spread.
Or if he rests from scientific tread,
'Tis only to sit back and sway his head
Through ninety-odd degrees of arc it seems,
Between two metaphysical extremes.
He sits back on his fundamental butt
With lifted snout and eyes (if any) shut
(He almost looks religious but he's not),
And back and forth he sways from cheek to cheek,
At one extreme agreeing with one Greek,
At the other agreeing with another Greek,
Which may be thought but only so to speak.
A baggy figure equally pathetic
When sedentary and when peripatetic.

The Nation, April 18, 1928, p. 447.

Humor helps us to be objective in even the most serious and sacred matters. In the sermons of some of the most spiritually illuminated and illuminating preachers of our day laughter is continually near the surface, and often above the surface. The chuckle of the congregation is not a sign that the mind has been distracted by unspiritual influences, but that the point has got home. "I wonder," said a distinguished theologian, "whether God has a sense of humor?"

The laughter that makes us objective towards

our limitations and yet confident of our powers is not the same as the laughter of Lazarus in Eugene O'Neill's play. The point that Lazarus strives and strives to make convincing is that selfhood is really insignificant and that lightsome laughter is the appropriate mood for dealing with this fact. As the drama was staged—magnificently staged—at the Pasadena Community Playhouse, the laughter that Lazarus evoked in others was not lightsome. Even his own "followers" did not attain to happy humor, and the masks that they wore expressed abandon without the salt of thought. *Thinking laughter* was reserved for Lazarus alone, but his philosophy and his laugh never, in fact, blended with each other. In spite of the fact that he applied hope-bearing terms such as "life" and "God" to the lifeless and undivine dust into which we are to be resolved, he could not make laughter really natural and free in the contemplation of such a destiny; it was, instead, an irruption suggestive of a pathological condition.

The kind of lightsomeness that releases the bound self is the kind that expresses belief in the significance of selfhood. Its function is, not to solve our problems, but to take the stiffness out of the joints of our mind. The main work has still to be done by rigorous thinking and—as I have more than once hinted—by vigorous repenting.

In some situations repenting is the only way in which straight thinking can perform its functions. By repentance I mean the frank, unequivocal realization and acknowledgment (to oneself at least) that one has been in the wrong in a sense so deep that the self expressed therein must be disavowed, together with the positive espousal of a contrary selfhood.

In any such reversal of self there will be emotion, but not necessarily any standard emotion. Upon this point there is much misunderstanding and unfinished thinking. The most common view of repentance is that it is the climax of chagrin, a humiliating experience, or even a grovelling of spirit that anyone who respects himself would shun if he could. This notion arose, no doubt, through the grovelling of "subjects" before a human "sovereign" whom they had offended. Then, the qualities of a human sovereign having been ascribed to God, religion made of repentance the abject thing of our tradition.

The ability to repent is one of the noblest attributes of man. The act is a privilege, not a dour necessity. It is, or can be, free growth from within, a normal event in rational living on the part of finite beings; therefore to be expected, provided for in our life-policies, and lived through in dignity rather than abjectness.

The emotions that can occur in such a crisis cover a whole spectrum from self-loathing to gladness. The state that we most need to cultivate is gladness or joy that we are able to break through the shell of self into a larger world. What a hell our selfhood would be if one could no longer repent of anything! Repentance is not the winter's grave of our self-respect; it is the springtime of it.

It is needless to ask what class in society is impoverishing itself most by neglecting the grace of repentance. For nearly every class and institution has built up one or another defence-mechanism whereby it employs some supposed virtue of its own as a justification for continuing on its present course. Neither in the State nor in the church; neither in education nor in business and industry;

neither in the family nor in the larger social groupings, do we find the habit of facing faults in a manly and rational way; in none of them does one hear the spring-song of growth through repentance.

Nor is this note audible in the vocalizations of most of our *intelligentsia* who occupy themselves so much with the fact of their own emancipation and the lack of it in their contemporaries. The function of the critic is both important and permanent, but the goal of criticism is neither the chagrin that depresses the powers of another, nor yet inflation of the critic's self-esteem through applause from the irresponsible. As in games the best sort of sportsmanship encourages and helps a competitor to do his best, so the discoverer of our defects should so reveal us to ourselves that we desire to improve ourselves. Criticism at its best is a sympathetic entering into the problems of others; it is not taking "pot shots" at them. When the problem for another is to achieve repentance, the problem for the critic is to make repentance seem attractive as well as necessary.

The writer or the speaker who merely utters flings at our faults suffers in his own person the same sort of closing-up or self-involution that he produces in those whom he "lambastes" or denounces. Lacking the sympathy or the humor to enter into the human-nature situation of another, he forfeits the capacity of self-criticism also. He becomes opinionated, dogmatic, sometimes intolerant, and at last careless of fact and unable to repent of his own follies.

Some of our difficulty, as I have indicated, arises from habits and traditions generated by experience under arbitrary governments, when citizens had compelling motive for concealment and for putting the best foot forward. But in addition we must admit

that our nature spontaneously shrinks from paying the cost of freedom; it longs for joy, but fears to grasp it. Self-overcoming, therefore, and self-discipline are indispensable.

Hence the peculiar service of the self-disciplined individuals who openly reverse themselves with evident happiness. We know how the young are helped to be self-critical and at the same time self-confident when a parent or a teacher makes amends for his errors, either intellectual or administrative. The late Josiah Strong told with utter simplicity how he, a Christian minister, discovered that his preaching had misconstrued the Gospel, and how through self-reversal he experienced a kind of joyful conversion (see My Religion in Everyday Life). Harry Emerson Fosdick has experienced, we may be sure, a sense of happy emancipation as he has publicly abandoned positions that he publicly took during the War. The revivalist, Gypsy Smith, having repeated in public a story that was damaging and offensive to the then Mayor Hylan, "took it all back" in public without qualification or self-excuse. One can safely guess that a few more acts like these on the part of preachers and evangelists would recommend religion more effectively than rivers of argument, denunciation, and pleading.

Is it Quixotic to hope for an ultimate reversal of the popular assumption that of course every individual and organization will be on the defensive with respect to what he or it is and is doing? May not this defensive attitude at last be seen to be what it verily is, weakness rather than strength? May not repentance become the expected thing, acquiring the dignity and the educational force that belong to any necessary aspect of our rationality? The growth of

cooperative thinking is one sign that this hope is not entirely without ground. Even "rights" and "vital interests" will be safer when this day comes than they are now. Demonstrate that you are unarmed, and others will lay down their arms; then you can "talk it over." Where wrong has been done, an unreserved acknowledgment of it has time and again smitten the hardness of men's spirits, and streams of generosity have burst forth. Often and often what we most need is someone who will take the initiative in repentance.

The diagnosis of humanity's sickness that was made in Part III indicated that the affected part is our intelligence, and that recovery depends upon sharpening our wits. It should now be evident that sharpening our wits is different from putting an edge upon a tool that is no part of ourselves. Our "wits" are not constituted of any impersonal intelligence, but of intelligence that quivers through and through with personality and the laws of its growth. Intellect, as such, cannot whittle itself to a point, as we see in the practical stupidities of intellectual men; the total attitude of the person towards himself and towards others is involved.

Shall we say, then, that the problem of release from our self-imposed bondage finds its solution in the Greek idea of being ourselves, or in the Christian idea of being saved from ourselves? The answer lies in the fact that when we become objective towards ourselves we come upon the requirement of repentance. We do, indeed, need to be ourselves, but not these selves that we behold in each of us! Here not only does naturalism in any of its current forms prove to be inadequate as a theory of motivation, but also all naïve confidence in ourselves whence-

soever it be derived. Self-denial is not a vagary of unhealthy minds; it is a law of reason; it is fundamental in the motivation of a man. We save our lives by losing them. The solution of the problem is far more Christian than it is Greek.

A remark was made some way back that the technic of freedom will be found to be, not a pattern to be imposed upon conduct, but something more like friendship or worship. The meaning of this possibly cryptic utterance will be the subject of the next and concluding chapter.

XXX

THE REALM OF FREE SPIRITS

The spirit of man, when it is most awake, eager, and demanding, pants for the open spaces and for companionship there. But what sort of open spaces? Real emancipation is not only release from something but also release into something. How, then, shall we describe the realm into which our spirits, when they breathe freedom, struggle to press? What could really satisfy a man?

The question can be answered only in and through the act of struggling to be free. *Solvitur ambulando.* Wants become defined through the interplay of satisfactions and discomforts that awaken thought. I did not want to stop at Daggett to have the contents of my car examined by the California State Bureau of Plant Quarantine and Pest Control, but when my questioning taught me that I might inadvertently import an insect that would destroy the orange groves amid which I write these words, I acquired a desire for the examination. But this learning, mark! was not the plastering upon me of an external compulsion; rather, events guided me back to myself, making me act from within more fully than before. It is experience that teaches us what we want, but it does it by pricking us awake so that we ask questions and compare satisfaction with satisfaction, desire with desire.

Having been at this business of self-discovery for

some time, there is no reason why we might not analyse the incidents and the processes of it, and thereby arrive at a general description of the attitudes that we take in our struggles to emancipate ourselves from ourselves. Attitudes are, of course, leanings "towards," and hence pointers-out of a direction and possibly a goal. What, then, is this "life" concerning which we say:

> 'Tis life of which our nerves are scant;
> 'Tis life, and more of life, we want?

This question can be asked and answered without saying whether this which we want really exists or is ultimately attainable. I shall not enter into the metaphysical question whether we are in process of discovering an ideal world that already exists; or whether we are participating in the creation of an ideal reality that shares existence with the unideal; or whether ideals are, in last analysis, chimerical. My sole question is this: If our likes could be filled to the very brim, what kind of world should we then find ourselves living in? It is appropriate to remark, however, that unless we permit our wants to go exploring, we cannot find out what the resources of the world are. We learn where food is, and where it is not, because hunger sets us upon a quest. Nature teaches us when we, the pupils, put questions to her. If, then, we desire to know whether our world-system is a fit habitation for persons, we must make the experiment of acting as persons, and then observe what happens. We must know what we want, and then go after it.

There is a tendency, which grows naturally out of the order in which the sciences developed—first the physical, then the biological, then the psychological

and sociological—to invert the order of inquiry that has just been named, asking first what the environment contains and only afterwards what our desires are. Then, under a general theory of adaptation, the assumption is made that our desires, in the nature of the case, must be adapted to the particular environment that most occupies scientific attention. If we say that we want something more than *this* environment provides, we are assured that we have misinterpreted ourselves, and that what we "really" want is only that which the already-assumed environment is ready to supply. Love is "in reality" only "galloping gonads," as a college student put it; and idealistic cravings are "in reality" an expression of some physiological vacuum.

This type of procedure regards itself as strictly objective, whereas it is infected with subjectivity in that a particular mental habit prevents consideration of unaccustomed questions. It is sheer self-imitation that makes us believe that the fundamental apprehension of our world is to be had by way of the physical sciences. It is a self-deceived subjectivity that restricts the description of our wants to subhuman categories instead of letting these wants speak for themselves.

The universe may make possible what we want, or it may not; the issue must be determined by observation and experiment under hypotheses adapted to testing the free flight of desire. This free flight is what now concerns us, and what we want to know is the direction in which it goes when it is most free, most completely personal and venturesomely rational. To change the figure, what is the medium that our wings must press against in order to fly? The answer is partly implied in the preceding sections.

First, how small or weak must a minority be in order to become totally insignificant and rationally negligible? I do not see how we can give any answer to this question that will not assume, rightly or wrongly, that there is a realm of free spirit that lives by forces resident within itself, and not by permission of anything external to itself. Whatever matter may prove to be, and whatever factor of determinism may reside in the temporal process; however irrational and self-defeating we may at times become, something that is self-nourishing appears to be capable of asserting itself in the weakest minority.

Second, how broad must cooperation in thinking be in order that I may become fully emancipated from myself? Who is to be included, and who is to be excluded from the fellowship of intelligence? Again, I do not see what answer can be given that will not assume that inclusive good-will is an inherent aspect of intelligence. Good-will assumes, likewise, to be a self-sustaining thing; it cannot be either purchased or compelled; rather, it creates the fellowship of minds from within mind.

Third, is the grace of repentance whereby we break through our shell into freedom a matter of arbitrary liking or a matter of obligation? Knowing the blunderous way that we live, and the hurts that our blunders entail, how can we possibly say that repentance may wait upon our convenience? How can we possibly maintain the rightful supremacy of rationality unless we assume that "I ought" is inherently involved in it? How could we possibly be at home and free in an a-moral universe?

Fourth, what reservations are made by the mind that fully emancipates itself from its self-imposed bondage? Is a taboo placed upon any subject or ma-

terial of thought? Is there any area of the universe that is "posted" so that we may not hunt upon it?

Men used to assume that there are such areas. The name of God was spoken with a hush; men even forbade themselves to speak it at all. They became mute and abject in the presence of supposedly fearsome forces, whether divine or demoniac; yes, some men and institutions and old thoughts were even walled off so that eyes might not see. All this was self-imprisonment from which it is necessary to achieve self-release. We must reach the point where we realize that it is only a pseudo-sanctity, a piece of mere conventionality, that reserves any kind of actuality from the peering eyes of anyone who desires to know. We are guilty of no irreverence when we investigate the pedigrees and weigh the conduct of all the gods; we must be able with tranquillity to endure uncertainties while waiting for evidence; and, as for the sanctity of any temple built by men, what men have built that they can rebuild or replace.

At this point release from the thralldom of self-hood is equivalent to making ourselves at home in the universe. The experience takes different forms with different persons. Freedom to doubt, coming to some persons like the sun suddenly emerging from a black cloud, makes them dance and skip; occasionally it reproduces, almost point for point, the emotional phenomena of religious conversion. That some, upon realizing their release, should luxuriate in skepticisms is not strange; they are like children from the city streets let loose in the country and pulling up wild-flowers by the roots. With other persons the experience of release takes the form of glad consecration to the rigorous labor and the strict methods whereby alone we can know the truth. Still others feel the

fellowship side of their new world. Separated from other minds hitherto by prejudice and fear, they now discover friends on all hands, and they glow with friendliness themselves. Not a few have said, "Behold, God is here, and I knew it not." For they feel that they are dealing with what L. P. Jacks calls "a living universe."

Thus, underlying our motivation when we most radically claim freedom is the implicit assumption that we are living in a universe in which no mental reservations are really needed by anyone. But we cannot go as far as this without assuming likewise that no reservations on behalf of any sort of self-interest are necessary. Here is where the shoe pinches most, and here is where self-deception most enslaves us. When we get beneath the surface of our mental reservations—theological, ethical, economic, social, political—we usually find that they are servants of some form of self-interest, whether of an individual, or of an institution, or of a social class. How desperately we cling to our littleness! But our very desperation is a defence-reaction towards something dimly appreciated as greater. We are like a very small child who wanted to get out of bed all by himself, but found himself hanging to the mattress, afraid to let go because he could not feel the floor under his toes, and yet not strong enough to pull himself back. The sickness of our society is in its fear to let go what it regards as its security, though it does not really secure. We employ argument and systems of thought to protect us, but we are like some persons accused of crime who refuse to make a clean breast of their conduct even to the attorney who defends them. Our salvation must come from a cooperative thinking that is more than abstract. I

have already remarked that cooperative thinking assumes that the realm of intelligence is the realm likewise of good-will or active respect for all persons. In the end, then, our struggle against our bondage is a struggle towards a cooperative intelligence that is likewise a cooperative choice and enjoyment of the good, whatever the good is.

I promised to keep as clear of metaphysics as the case permits. I have not even argued, though I am convinced, that the best clue we have to the general character of the universe consists in this, that persons exist, and are, as a matter of fact, in the process of achieving freedom, and of achieving it cooperatively. The experience of becoming free, even though it be incomplete, even though it never can be completed, surely casts a beam of light into the problem of being. An original, self-sustaining light. For the becoming of freedom is an experience, a datum, primary and underived. We do not learn it by inference from some otherwise-known system of things; we do not need to ask whether a place can be made for it in a view of nature that is derived from the pre-human world. It is here; it makes its own place, and our view of nature must be sufficiently large and objective to include it. This does not deny either the general self-consistency of nature that we call law, nor yet any specific connection of events that can be shown to be probable. Any experience whatever, the experience of becoming free not excepted, occurs under conditions that can theoretically be formulated in a general proposition. But the event need not repeat or continue the conditions under which it arises. Out of a songless egg, someone has said, emerges the song of a lark.

The realization that one is freely a member of such

a realm of spirits as I have described is not only like worship, it is indistinguishable from worship. For it is just the opposite of spiritual isolation. This outward movement from self, though it be initiated within us, is not, in any complete and exclusive sense, initiated by us. It is wrought through us as much as by us! It chooses us as much as we choose it. Over and over again the experience repeats itself of being certain, just where we are most original, that then and there we are organs of something greater than our particular selves. It is as if each particular self were enveloped and suffused and already partly actuated by some self-like principle that is abroad in the universe.

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